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ABSTRACT

Thirteen papers and a speech address the theme of who makes education policy in Australia. Kwong Lee Dow's address assesses national planning in uncertain times and urges flexibility. John Steinle outlines the operation of Australian policy-making and recommends developing think tanks. Edward Holdaway analyzes the complex relationship between research and policy, concluding that research has a long term indirect impact. Alan Lindsay argues that broad social, political, and economic factors determine policy in higher education, and A. James Gaite and William Young consider the lack of influence of professional educators. Gareth Williams analyzes British educational policy. Four papers consider broader participation in making policy: Lady Anna Cowen discusses improving parent involvement, K. J. Austin Asche treats the role of the community, Brian Caldwell recommends a framework for effective school councils, and Margaret Bearlin probes the low participation of women in policy-making. The concluding reports discuss specific programs: Shirley Randell analyzes the policy-making process of the Schools Commission's Disadvantaged County Areas Program. Alan Randell reviews the application of Paulo Freire's theories to an Aboriginal education project. Kevin Smith chronicles the influences behind shelving the Wyndham Report, a major policy initiative, and Anna Alderson offers a case history of policy-making and implementation. (MJL)

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Education Policy Making in Australia

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The Australian College of Education

EDUCATION POLICY MAKING IN AUSTRALIA

Selected papers from the Twenty-third Annual Conference of the Australian College of Education held in Hobart, 10-14 January 1982, and incorporating the Eleventh Buntine Oration.

edited by

R.F. Broadbent

The Australian College of Education
Carlton, Victoria
1982

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FOREWORD

At the beginning of a year in which there was still considerable concern in the education community about government actions which forced the amalgamation of many institutions of higher education, about detailed financial guidelines provided to Commonwealth education commissions, and about the impact and implications of several State reports on future educational provision it was most appropriate for the College to focus on the question *Who Makes Education Policy?* at its twenty-third Annual Conference in Hobart in January 1982.

This concern is reflected in the papers presented at the conference. In the Buntine Oration delivered during the conference, Professor Kwong Lee Dow examines our capacity for effective planning in education in times of uncertainty. Along with a number of authors in this volume he laments the demise of ERDC and CDC and the consequent loss of momentum and commitment to education research and development in Australia. He suggests that future generations may deliver a harsh judgment on the inability of educators to prevent the loss of these bodies. He suggests that 1981 brought, in a very short space of time, changes on an unprecedented scale which, whilst giving rise to large areas of uncertainty, also present many opportunities and challenges to educators to mould the future. He traces some of these in the needs of the 16 to 19 years age group.

John Steinle's paper examines education policy decision-making in Australia on a broader scale. He recognises an array of influences in this process but concludes that ultimately governments make our education policy, placing heavy reliance on advice from senior bureaucrats whom he believes should be given greater freedom to inform the public about educational matters. He advocates a continuing examination of better processes for policy making and raises the very interesting suggestion of education 'think tanks'.

A detailed analysis of the relationship between research and policy is provided in Professor Holdaway's examination of major 'research-policy' activities of recent years. This shows clearly the complexity of the relationship which sees research contributing more by way of a long-term indirect impact than through direct causal links. In his concluding remarks Holdaway stresses the need for Australia to maintain a national capacity to undertake educational research, provide a data base for decision-making and to act as a clearing-house and store-house for information on R & D activities.

Alan Lindsay's paper outlines the development of present arrangements for national-level policy-making for Australian higher education. Particular attention is given to Commonwealth-State relations and the functions of Commonwealth education commissions. Lindsay argues that major determinants of education policy now are broad social, political and economic considerations and an estimation of electoral impact. Gaite and Young make a similar assessment in what they see as the failure of professional educators to significantly influence the direction of education policy. This is illustrated in their examination of the impact of recent major education reports and inquiries and the views of professional groups. They argue that apparent

influence in the implementation of earlier reports was due to the existence of a general climate of acceptability in times of economic growth.

Professor Williams' paper enables some parallels to be drawn between the British and Australian experience of recent times. He discusses the major influences in determining the government's education policy agenda and the difficulty of simultaneously achieving policy objectives in education and reducing overall public expenditure.

Lady Cowen and Justice Asche underline the important and essential contribution by non-professionals to the policy-making process. Their particular experiences of personal involvement at parent and community levels in the formulation of education policies illustrate the diversity of ways in which such contributors can be and have been influential. Both authors emphasise the co-operative partnership which must exist between professional educators, parents and other members of the community if we are to be well served by our education systems.

The emergence of school councils in Australia is a practical means of providing an expanded role for the community in the policy process. In his paper Brian Caldwell provides a framework for the successful operation of school councils, describes what often does occur in response to policy issues and suggests guidelines for what should occur.

The involvement of women in policy-making is analysed in the paper by Margaret Bearlin. She examines reasons why women do not participate more fully and argues that if they are to participate equally with men then administrative structures should be changed to embody values with which women can identify. She argues that this would lead to qualitative improvements in education.

The final four papers answer the question *Who makes education policy?* by reference to specific programmes or policy issues. Shirley Randell describes the policy process in the Schools Commission's Disadvantaged Country Areas Program in terms of a model characterised by a reciprocal series of inter-relationships between different groups of key contributors, ranging from the Commonwealth government to the local rural school community. Alan Randell examines the implications for policy-making of aspects of Paulo Freire's theories and reviews the experience of their operation in an Aboriginal education project. Kevin Smith provides a fascinating and detailed account of the initial 'shelving' and subsequent adoption of the Wyndham Report in NSW, which illustrate the importance of political factors in the adoption of a major educational policy initiative. The concluding paper by Anna Alderson also reveals the complexities of the process of education policy formulation and implementation when she traces the history of technical education in WA.

Participants at this conference spent an enjoyable, searching and provocative week in exploring answers to the question posed by the conference theme *Who makes education policy?* Readers of this volume of papers drawn from the conference are invited to accept the same challenge.

Robert Broadbent

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November 1982.

THE BUNTINE ORATION 1982

KWONG LEE DOW

The Eleventh Buntine Oration was delivered during the Annual Conference on 11 January 1982 in the University Centre, University of Tasmania by Professor Kwong Lee Dow, Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne, and Chairman, Victorian Institute of Secondary Education.

The biennial Oration was established in 1960 by Dr R.M. Buntine, Dr M.A. Buntine, Dr R.D. Buntine and Mrs B.M.G. Wilson to perpetuate the memory of their father Walter Murray Buntine who was prominent in the development of education in Victoria over a long period during the early years of the present century. After graduation he spent some years in private teaching and then accepted the headmastership of Caulfield Grammar School in 1896 where he remained until he retired in 1932. He played a leading role in settlement of many of the problems of education. He served on Melbourne University Council and on many other important committees in the University and in the Church. In 1935 he represented the Government of Victoria at the first International Conference on Education in Geneva. He was partly responsible for the formation of the Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria and its Training Institute for teachers.

I am grateful for the honour bestowed upon me through the invitation to present the Buntine Oration for 1982. This gives me the opportunity to express some personal reflections and perspectives on an aspect of education important for the College. As our conference theme relates to the making of education policy, I have chosen to offer some thoughts on our capacities for effective planning in times of obvious uncertainty. I shall first refer to some key events of the past year which inevitably will shape our educational future. Then I will turn to another area of the highest priority: issues surrounding the educational opportunities for the 16 to 19 age group. I hope the conclusions drawn will have meaning as we each go about our own tasks in an educational environment in the throes of basic reorientation where change is only partly predictable.

All of us who watch, and who in different ways participate in the formulation and implementation of education policy should with profit, ponder the consequences of the scene changes which occurred in Australian education in 1981. For some of my colleagues that year proved to be one of unexpected anxiety, of uncertainty, and indeed, a year of changing fortunes. Looking back at the way events have turned out, much that has happened was not anticipated when the year began. In a short space of time, a good deal of the fabric of Australian education has been shaken by structural change, by legislative change, by reductions in public spending on education, and by shifts in personnel which add stature and challenge for some, but have not been without embarrassment for others.

Disbanding the Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC) has meant the removal of a national focal point for the coordination of our educational research effort. The contributors to that effort are many and varied, spanning those whose research commitment extends over a lifetime and others for whom an involvement in research is but a slight and an occasional part of their activities. ERDC, through its links with the Australian Association for Research in Education, with the researchers in universities, colleges and the research branches of State Education Departments and its

particular relationship with the Australian Council for Educational Research, offered not only a point of coordination, but a focus for consideration of priority research areas, for thinking about the developing relationships between research and policy formation, and a means for anticipating well in advance new areas likely to come into prominence in future planning and policy making.

Because the way in which research influences education policy and practice is subtle, sometimes slow and operates through complicated and elusive mechanisms, many will remain oblivious to what was lost in 1981. That loss is not primarily the disappearance of funds. The funds which supported research projects, research training and the dissemination of research findings were modest enough, and if the will was there, ought somehow to be scraped up from around the system. The serious loss is the lowering of momentum and sense of commitment amongst researchers and potential researchers, the guiding of these researchers toward productive areas and priority fields of endeavour, and the consequent lack of stimulation for those who read, talk and think about, and quietly interpret and use the ideas as much as the findings which research generates.

In like manner, we stand to lose at the same time the parallel capacity to develop, in a national context, curriculum offerings for schools which cross state boundaries and provide, for busy teachers, an enlightening and broad perspective for their subject preparation. We are in danger now of failing to capitalize on the large-scale and cost-effective curriculum development programmes which only recently we have learned to tailor to meet the varying circumstances of different school and classroom environments. Building the expertise to do all this is a hard-won process. When lost, these skills will not be instantly recoverable, nor can they simply be imported.

The next generation may deliver a harsh judgement on our inability, in 1981, to prevent the destruction of the organs of national research and curriculum policies. What judgement will be delivered on our planning for reduction in teacher supply, with such relatively sudden, rather late and decidedly haphazard amalgamations of institutions of teacher education? The early warning signals were writ large enough. Australian educators travelled to North America, to the United Kingdom and to Europe and brought back first hand accounts of mergers, closures, retrenchments and redundancies. Yet here in Australia we can hardly be satisfied with our own planning capacity as we find ourselves ill prepared and so unable to effect sensible action with the rapidity now imposed by governments. We have been tardy in accepting lowered planning numbers, tardy in heeding the warnings from central authorities, and have only now been forced to recognize that the jobs to be lost cannot entirely be covered through attrition.

So now we turn to new leaders for new institutions. Ahead of us lie the struggles to re-establish confidence amongst staff, students and prospective students, to build cohesion into new courses and to develop anew a sense of institutional purpose. The inescapable lesson seems to me to be that our institutional structures, traditions and planning capacities are unable to cope

with voluntary reductions, redirections of purpose and the forming of new associations. The decision-making will then fall increasingly to governments and their advisers, and we can expect more overt and more frequent interventions in our affairs in the future. If we are to preserve essential features and minimize the disruption caused by the ad hoc and politicized approach characteristic of external action, we shall have to develop structures and capacities which can respond more rapidly, more decisively and more effectively to the wider needs we must serve.

Within the scheme of higher education, teacher education also falls prey to pressures within large institutions where other priorities prevail. Those in the colleges who believe university schools of education escape unscathed should cast their eyes across the waters. When colleagues in such illustrious education schools as Bristol and Berkeley see themselves in difficulty, the lesson is that the institutional context can be paramount when harsh cutbacks are afoot, international reputations in one field of endeavour notwithstanding.

Finally, to round out my selective catalogue of educational change in 1981, I remind you of the impending reorganisation of the government school system in my own state, a task again initiated by government, a task pursued with measured tenacity, particularly visible at the moment. This restructuring of the Victorian Education Department has been a systematically managed process, with goal setting, with community consultations of various kinds, with detailed and involved planning which has caught up large numbers of people. New organisational flow charts have been sanctioned, people in top posts have been moved dramatically, yet the reorganisation is still in an early phase. It has yet to make a mark on the lives of schools where learning and teaching occurs. Despite the clear enunciation of intentions, it is by no means clear what the overall effect will be, depending as that must, on initiatives being taken and co-operation being won at so many and varied points.

In at least four areas then, those of national education research policy, national curriculum development, the refashioning of institutions of teacher education, and the system wide reorganisation of a large state education department, 1981 has brought change on an unprecedented scale, condensed into a very short space of time. Such changes cannot occur without giving rise to large areas of uncertainty. There are yet many opportunities to mould the future.

Let me now briefly sketch some elements of planning and policy in the field of public examinations, the transition from school to work, and relate this to the more comprehensive needs of the 16 to 19 age group.

Over today and tomorrow, the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE) mails results to the 27,000 candidates for the 1981 Victorian Higher School Certificate. Not a unique event, it has parallels elsewhere and it has persisted over many years. But for some of us in Victoria, this moment is not without significance, representing as it does a culminating point from a policy formulated four years ago, from an organisation set up only a little earlier, and formed against a backdrop tinged with hostility and suspicion as well as with hope and goodwill.

A decade has passed since the former university-based examination Board in Victoria systematically sought opinions which led to the conclusion that, inadvertently, without seeking to do so, tertiary institutions and especially universities were preventing the curriculum in secondary schools from adapting and modifying into courses to meet changing needs and an expanded clientele. Curriculum control was seen to lie within the public examinations, and the battle for freedom to determine the curriculum content in schools was spearheaded through a strategy to limit or abolish these examinations. As you know, examinations before year 12 were gradually discontinued around the Australian states from the mid-1960's, with each state dealing in a separate way, in terms of its own traditions, with the assessment at the end of secondary education and the selection procedures for tertiary entrance.

In Victoria, by the mid-1970's, legislation had been drawn to establish a statutory body to take responsibility for assessments of school leavers. Various standards of thought contributed to defining the role of this body. At the time the Schools Council in England and Wales was an acknowledged influence in the support of many curriculum development projects in the U.K. and the model of a body with a large representation of teachers on its governing Council did not escape notice here. This was the time too, when the OECD popularized the recognition that a long and complex process was involved in the transition from school to work or further study. This language has been built into the VISE Act, and its governing Council has a preponderance of persons whose essential commitment is to the field of secondary education, together with a large lay community representation. Put another way, the tertiary voice is small, the university voice smaller, and these simple facts go far in explaining the direction of change now prevailing.

Year 12 courses and study have emerged to meet the diversity of needs of youth in a contemporary cosmopolitan society. A course accreditation process has been completed. It involved detailed review of existing subjects in a new mode of combined curriculum and assessment responsibility, preserving external examinations and introducing or extending school assessments. New subjects are incorporated in that structure. As well, a quite new range of totally school assessed subjects was introduced, and some whole course programmes submitted by particular schools or groups of schools were endorsed.

Here, then, is a demonstrable willingness to certify, and in this sense, legitimate, a wide range of alternatives, partly in the hope that such offerings will attract more students and reinforce other school initiatives taken in the curriculum of the earlier secondary years. Schools may thus better accommodate the real needs of all their students, enabling early leavers to perhaps gain another year or two in maturing in a guided, structured and hospitable environment. These are the people shown beyond doubt to be most vulnerable to extended periods of unemployment, and least able to cope with the ever increasing demands of living in a complex society. They need more time to achieve the levels of confidence required through development of verbal and numerical skills, together with the personal and social skills of working alongside others. Properly prepared for, there must be long-term

advantage in retaining more of our youth in education, either full-time or part-time, either in schools or in TAFE. Compared with similar countries overseas, our retention rates appear less favourable today than they did a decade ago.

Nevertheless, the changes introduced have had two disquieting effects. One relates to schools. It was natural that, given some freedom and responsibility to contribute in assessment, teachers felt a little insecure and unsure of their new role. From Queensland experience almost a decade earlier, we know that this leads to over zealous internal testing and the imposition of excessive requirements on students. We have not been successful in preventing this. Subject committees of the Institute have tended to respond by spelling out their requirements in extraordinary detail. We are in danger of succumbing to the natural expansion of bureaucracy. The second effect concerns the more complicated relationships which now exist with the tertiary institutions, especially the universities. The tendency in the past for higher education to dictate to the schools is turning around and now, increasingly, the higher education institutions are adjusting to accept a wider range of backgrounds as deemed appropriate by secondary education authorities. (At an inter-governmental conference on Higher Education Policies at OECD last October, I noted this to be a widespread trend).

Organisations like VISE need to balance the conflicting priorities from various interest groups while maintaining an internal integrity. No less, they must maintain the respect and confidence of these groups. This is extremely difficult, but failure to achieve all of these ends in the climate operating today will, I think, quickly lead governments and the community to take independent action. The fragility of apparently secure institutions is appreciated by only a few.

Concern that secondary curricula have become academic and esoteric, that school leavers are sometimes ill-prepared for the world of work, combined with an awareness of the deeper implications of long term youth unemployment, led the Commonwealth Government, late in 1979, to announce a commitment to a transition programme aimed toward a comprehensive policy for youth. This initiative sought to rationalize and co-ordinate separate programmes earlier established for particular groups and needs. Although again our planning base at first seemed inadequate for effective use of resources suddenly available, the transition programme holds the prospect of allowing schools, and TAFE institutions, some seeding funds to promote curriculum changes in line with wider needs.

Our search is essentially for a fresh conceptualization of the needs of this age group, unconstrained by the traditional emphases of the upper secondary schools and the influence of the universities upon them, not constrained either by the limitation of an earlier era which affected the outlook of the former technical colleges, and indeed not constrained by educational patterning alone. A technological, communication-oriented society needs a horizon which can take in a variety of forms and styles of education. In compass it needs to acknowledge the expansion of service employment, to see education related to employment but not only to employment, and to hold in view both education

and employment as linked to life-styles which our community sanctions for young adults. We think not of children's institutions for children, but of adult institutions in which young adults learn in partnership and co-operation with their peers and with older students who will sometimes be their teachers and sometimes fellow students.

Looking across the areas of priority to which I have referred, I am driven to conclude that pressures outside the world of professional educators will continue to force new issues and new priorities to the top of the education agenda. The hand of government is now clearly visible in areas deemed by agreement in earlier generations as the province of the professionals.

Governments, ministers and their policy advisers have a capacity to draw bold outlines. In filling in these outlines and frameworks, educators have countless opportunities for influence and for creative leadership. We should remind ourselves, especially in a time of change and uncertainty, that such leadership does not reside with a chosen few, but is to be identified at a host of levels within institutions, in professional organisations and in classrooms no less than amongst government commissions and systemwide bureaucracies. Our structures, our organisational modes and our outlook need to be adapted for flexible planning. The eighties may prove a time when educators lead the major reorientation of mission and purpose through which the educational edifice is undoubtedly passing. Our alternative role will be late, responsive reaction to externally imposed directives.

THE SYSTEMS AND ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY MAKING

JOHN R. STEINLE

Introduction

In the book *Yes Minister*, which is the diary of a bumbling and devious Cabinet Minister, James Hacker, and his dealings with a lazy and conniving permanent head, Sir Humphry Appleby, we are given an insight into the policy making process in the Department of Administrative Affairs. This seems to be based upon political opportunism, public service chicanery and pure chance. It all makes for extremely good comedy. In one entry Hacker observes[1]:

> . . . the Opposition aren't really the opposition. They're just called the Opposition. But, in fact, they are the opposition in exile. The Civil Service are the opposition in residence.

As a member of a State Public Service who scarcely sees himself as a part of the Opposition, I hope, in the first part of this paper, to explore briefly not only the relationship between governments and its public service but the relationships between all those who work in education systems with governments.

Now I cannot think of anything more tiresome nor less helpful to an informed audience than a categoric listing and detailed analysis of the various systems in Australian education. I propose, therefore, to assume that there are sufficient similarities between the various educational systems, to lump them together in this context. In doing so I am making a number of further generalisations. The first is that the essence of free and effective government is the constructive harnessing of divergent points of view. The second is that state educational bureaucracies are becoming smaller and less directive of schools while independent schools are increasingly joining together to form a variety of independent school boards and commissions which have as a prime aim that of influencing government policies. Clearly there are schools which, while heavily supported by government funding, remain outside of such systems but they are few. They, too, exert influence.

If I need to justify these propositions let me refer to the reaction of non-government schools to the newly formed Education Commission in New South Wales:

> Despite the close involvement in education policy making many administrators of independent schools are unhappy with the present situation. Some Catholic leaders have expressed concern that the new Education Commission might prejudice their access to the Minister . . . Some leaders would like the relationship to be even closer by the inclusion of independent school representatives on the Education Commission . . . In the present system, which is unlikely to be seriously altered in this respect by the Education Commission, independent schools have the best of both worlds: their autonomy is protected in most major respects, yet they are well integrated into the policy making process over matters which they share with the State school system.[2]

The major point which I hope to make in this paper is that the role of any of these systems in policy making ought not to be approached simplistically. Policy making within plural democracies such as our own tends to defy simple definitions, which is why this conference is wisely posing the question, *Who Makes Education Policy?* I propose therefore to take a brief look at how policy decisions are made in this country. I shall make one or two observations about how these decisions are influenced by public pressure and how attempts are made to inform the public of educational issues. Finally, I should like to refer to an alternative method of developing policy which I find attractive but which is not currently used in this country.

The Policy Making Process

A scan of the literature on policy reveals endless argument over definition, but for the purpose of this paper I turn to Spann in *Government Administration in Australia.*[3] He argues that a policy is simply a course of action, or an intended course of action, which comprises an objective, a desired course of events, a selected line of action and a declaration of intent. He adds that a policy only lives up to its name if something actually happens. Significantly, he notes that action can include inaction, that is, a decision can be taken to do nothing.

Much of the literature suggests that policies eventuate from a careful scrutiny of alternatives and their consequences by the persons responsible for deciding policy. In practice, as Spann makes clear, there is little to support the notion that policy making conforms to this rational and visionary model. Most government is reactive, it does not seek out 'potential' problems in advance, but tends to make decisions on problems which are real and pressing. In the process of implementation policies are frequently modified and, he asserts, most policy-making is not done by individuals, but it is the result of compromises made between many groups and individuals. Finally, much of the information necessary to make a rational choice between alternatives may not be readily available, or possible to collate within the time available to policy-makers. The aim, therefore, becomes not one of achieving the best possible of all policies but, rather, one which on the basis of experience, appears to be acceptable. Simon refers to this as 'satisficing.'[4] It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Lindblom[5] refers to policy making as 'an extremely complex analytical and political process to which there is no beginning or end, and the boundaries of which are most uncertain.'

Within our State education systems, the leading roles are clearly with the Minister and the Permanent Head. As a major policy adviser, a Permanent Head will obviously have influence upon policy decisions but as the Head of the Home Civil Service in the United Kingdom has pointed out, their roles are 'complementary not competitive and the functions they perform and the qualities they need are essentially different'.[6] According to Kogan, 'The making of policy is continuously in the hands of civil servants who create, as it were, low frequency policy waves. Ministers bring with them high frequency activity which can initiate, change, strengthen or condemn a whole policy.'[7]

For Ministers are mainly concerned about the broad sweep of policies, rather than their detailed application and about formulating the precise policy

changes which they wish to see implemented. Permanent Heads, on the other hand, are primarily, and ultimately responsible for the efficient organisation of their departments and for ensuring that Ministers are provided with the kind of service they want from their departments, including briefing on both departmental and general matters. The successful administrator, however, will not be alone in carrying out this 'briefing' role. He will rely upon 'the accumulated wisdom and, of course, prejudices of all his colleagues."[8] Finally, because, the Permanent Head is first and foremost responsible for administration, it follows that he or she will have significant discretion in the interpretation of policy and in effecting that policy.

I do not think it is too much to assert that those who influence the direction of education in the non-government sectors are similarly influenced by their colleagues, both religious and lay.

Australian Educational Systems and Policy Making

There is a fundamental tension which is common both to individual schools and to school systems: on the one hand there is a need for flexibility, freedom and informality, as well as a need to allow for spontaneity, imagination and creativity and, on the other, there is a need for organisation, efficiency, predictability and accountability. All of these attributes are required whether the environment is micro or macro in scale, the difficulty is to get the balance right.

This reflects a wider parallel dilemma within democracies of balancing the rights and needs of the individual against those of the community at large and persuading it to accept your advice. On the other hand, democracies place a high value upon the right of the individual to choose, but also provide a series of institutional checks and counterweights to ensure social cohesion and, hence, the ultimate preservation of their societies.

What do bureaucracies contribute to this treaty? To find the answer to that question we need to examine the reasons for the emergence of both State and non-State bureaucracies in Australia. In part, they have been established to administer the allocation of resources to schools on agreed bases and to argue the case for their share of the available resources. The need for any administration, however, is not based simply on the function of seeking and distributing funds, and this may be particularly claimed for a social enterprise like education. A public schools department is part of a larger unit, the government, which serves the needs of the whole community and acts in the wide public interest providing a counterweight against anarchy. The definition of that interest may vary from time to time, deriving its meaning from traditions, the views of society, its values, priorities and, lastly, its politics. Non-state systems plainly serve the needs of particular sections of the community based generally, but not invariably, upon religious affiliations.

In simple terms, the Westminster system provides for the people to elect a Parliament, the majority in Parliament choose a Ministry, the Ministers consider advice they receive from the permanent public service, usually via the chief executive officers and from other sources, and make government

decisions based on that advice. The public service then carries out those decisions. The line of responsibility thus appears very direct. The public servant is responsible to the Minister, the Minister to the Parliament, and the Parliament to the people.

In practice, the exercising of responsibility especially in the area of policy development, is very much more complex than this. It is influenced by a network of State and Federal government commissions, departments and catholic education commissions and boards for independent schools, together with a host of other lobby groups with varying degrees of formal recognition. Furthermore, the theoretical framework suggests clear and precise dispositions of goals. As Dror points out, however, politicians tend to avoid being explicit about goals, because intangible goals give greater autonomy, and flexibility, and provide greater opportunities for compromise.[9] This relationship and, in particular, the role of the state and federal bureaucracies is obviously critical in the determination of policies by governments.

Schumpeter reminds us that not every one understands democracy and its requirements and says:

> . . . bureaucracy is not an obstacle to democracy but an inevitable complement to it . . . It is not enough that bureaucracy should be efficient in current administration and competent to give advice. It must be strong enough to give advice. It must also be strong enough to guide and, if need be, to instruct the politicians who head the Ministries . . . It must be a power in its own right.[10]

Bureaucracies possess considerable and, perhaps, increasing influence in the shaping of new policies, or in preventing innovatory ones from being developed and implemented. They certainly exercise influence in ways that are sometimes hidden from public awareness, scrutiny and influence. It is these two facts in conjunction which produce a dilemma for democratic theory and parliamentary government as we know it.

Policy Making and the Community

Divergence in practice from traditional Westminster theory is a recurring theme in critiques of centralised government administration. Apochryphal stories are told of Permanent Heads who endeavour to subvert the policies of Ministers and governments. Hacker speaks of Sir Humphrey's policy of 'creative inertia'[11] by which nothing is changed until the Minister chases the Permanent Head who keeps him at bay by inundating him with administrivia.

Part of the same policy is to keep the Minister in the dark through silence, of which there are three kinds. Discreet silence is employed when Sir Humphrey wants to hide facts, stubborn silence indicates that no action is to be taken and courageous silence results from being caught out. Courageous silence implies that he could vindicate himself completely if he were free to tell all, but he is too honourable to do so.

In my experience Ministers and Permanent Heads quickly develop a working relationship based upon an understanding of their differing roles and responsibilities and thus they work together amicably and constructively.

Wilenski points out the potential within the bureaucracies for power wielding and social control and argues that ministers can scarcely be accountable in the Westminster sense, when they are unable to sustain an intimate knowledge of the wide range of decisions made in their name.[12] His strategy for overcoming the accountability 'vacuum' is presented as a series of 'checks', which include greater representation of the broad community, devolution and delegation of power within the bureaucracy and community participation in decision-making. A consideration of the checks and balances already in the present structure which hedge about both ministers and bureaucracies at both state and federal levels suggests that many agree. Certainly, the number is growing in many states.

The parliamentary system is fundamentally an accountability mechanism in itself which, like the bureaucracies that service it, is decentralised. Furthermore, just as ministers are accountable to Cabinet, to the Parliament and ultimately to the people, so heads of departments are responsible to one minister and they have as much power as the Cabinet and the minister collectively allow. To these should be added those controls over both ministers and their bureaucracies in the form of Parliamentary Committees, such as Public Accounts Committees, Estimates Committees, Public Works Committees, together with Budget Review Committees, Ombudsmen, Sex Discrimination Boards, Equal Opportunities Boards, and so on.

In addition to these bodies which are established for specific purposes to scan the actions of ministers and permanent heads, there is a much wider audience, the enormous network of formal and informal organisations which are interested in education policy making. I do not propose to list the educational interest groups in this country. That has been undertaken very comprehensively by others. In the very useful framework developed by Talcott Parsons[13] he suggests listing them under the headings of political groups, managerial groups and technical groups. Each group is then considered under the headings of school, local, state and federal. The political group includes not only ministers and other parliamentarians but, also, associated bodies such as the federal commissions. The managerial group includes the various Education Departments, state commissions and boards. The technical group refers to teachers and those who actually work in classrooms.

It is interesting to speculate on the place of school principals in this classification. Are they included in the managerial or technical category? Of course, our own College of Education should be included, although it is an unusual organisation in that it is an aggregation of members of many different interest groups.

How do interest groups influence bureaucracies in practice? First, let me remind you of the nature of the decision making process in these bureaucracies as it operates in 1982. Early bureaucratic machinery does persist and, inevitably, so do some of the attitudes that it fostered, but I find it paradoxical that present systems continue to be seen as simple Weberian hierarchies when, in fact, they functionally comprise three kinds of structures for three distinct purposes.[14] Certainly, there are hierarchical structures within bureaucracies in

the Weberian sense, with leaders at the top of the pyramid and followers in the lower echelons. These structures perform operations where procedures are laid down and where any variation is seen as undesirable. Supervision and accountability are of paramount importance. Much of the clerical and financial work of state Education Departments is conducted in this manner so that people are paid, leave is granted and so on.

There are also egalitarian structures in which committees function on a voting or consensus model. This approach is used where consensus is required on guidelines to be observed by people working together to achieve agreed general goals. Curriculum and research work tends to be undertaken in this way. Informal bodies with little internal structure are employed in an ad hoc manner when working parties, task forces or reviews are undertaken or innovations introduced. Such groupings are short lived and they are disbanded when the task is accomplished. All three groupings are common place in most large modern bureaucracies and a moment of reflection will bring to mind examples for each State.

Nonetheless, rumours and accusations continue to circulate about educational bureaucracies which are centralised, inflexible and unyielding. The facts are that in some areas they may be all of these things but, by and large, they are decentralised, flexible and they at least see themselves as providing an infrastructure which frees teachers as much as possible to promote the best teaching-learning environments possible. In general, they recognise that it is for this reason that they exist.

I have argued that governments and their bureaucracies accept both the wisdom and the propriety of listening to the advice and criticisms of such groups. Do they in turn also have a responsibility to keep interest groups informed of problems they perceive and of their thinking about solutions?

In the Westminster system generally bureaucracies have played a relatively minor part in the general processes of public discussion. Most people would agree that a democratic system clearly requires wide ranging and lively processes of public discussion and argument. These processes include the provision of information, the canvassing of issues and alternatives of policy well before decisions have to be taken and the mobilisation of opposition to influential views. These processes need to go on actively and continuously if the wider public is to have an opportunity to have a say in decisions.[11] Clearly the extent of democratic participation in society will depend, among other things, on the amount and quality of publicity and information. In our society such publicity is largely the responsibility of politicians, political parties and their not inconsiderable press machinery, the spokesmen of interest groups and other powerful organisations, and of individuals and small organisations with a concern for some aspect of the public interest.

In Australia bureaucracies are seldom expected to play a major part in these processes. Indeed, it is often the case that the influence of bureaucracies is exerted in the direction of evading or discouraging publicity. Their task is to listen and to advise and not to be seen or heard. The greater involvement of bureaucracies in the general processes of publicity and discussion can be seen

as an important democratic check on bureaucratic power, and as a means of making bureaucracies more responsive and responsible. It can also be argued that bureaucracies might have a distinctive contribution to make to the processes of dissemination of information, the elaboration of issues of long range policy and the stimulation of thought and discussion.

Now again as Partridge reminds us[16] only a foolish person would wish to throw away the advantages of, and the values associated with, most of the prevailing conventions of responsible government, ministerial responsibility, bureaucratic anonymity, impartiality and discretion. Few of us would wish to see a politicised public service along American lines. But some other answers present themselves and are worthy of our consideration. First, there is the practice which is followed here and in other countries of the issuing of papers dealing with matters of fundamental importance. Such papers can be at various levels of difficulty and technicality. They need to be written in an interesting manner, readily understandable and without jargon. Wider circulation and greater use of such *green papers* could well bring state and federal bureaucracies into more public discussion. Obviously, not all subjects can be dealt with in this way.

One other method of informing the public of issues without compromising governments is the use of reports.[17] There has been a plethora of such reports on education in this country over the last quarter of a century and one must say that while the quality is pretty uneven, they have certainly proven useful in crystallizing issues and in assisting government to gauge public opinion and to develop policies. One reason for the increase in the number and importance of reports at the national level has been the increased participation of the federal government in educational policy making. During the sixties and seventies as the federal government has increasingly entered the field of education, it has tended to seek advice from a variety of committees and commissions which comprise the major interest groups. It has then published these reports and subsequently taken legislative action in the light of the reports and the feedback. These reports become a basis for discussion between the state and federal governments and the various systems.

The Australian Schools Commission has a splendid record for producing informed documents on educational issues. These documents have grappled with issues of moment, they have been critical and objective and have been followed up by action. Since they produce regular comprehensive reports and, also, take up single issues such as *Girls, Schools and Society* and *Some Aspects of School Finance in Australia,* they have been more successful in influencing public and government thinking than some authors of grandiose reports produced here and in other countries. As a result, the Australian Schools Commission has emerged as a very powerful force in influencing the policies of both state and federal governments.

Reports, too, not all of which are public documents, provide the basis of discussion for the Australian Education Council. This body has become an increasingly significant platform for discussing policy at the national level. While it is one of the few closed bodies in the educational arena, it needs to be pointed out that it is advised by a Standing Committee comprising state and

federal officers representing all sectors of education. Furthermore, it comprises all state and federal educational ministers and its decisions are generally in the nature of recommendations to governments and these are arrived at by consensus.

Education departments also form a significant part of a network of educational research in this country which is significant in a number of areas including policy analysis. One can only express deep regret that this contribution has been restricted with the demise of the Education Research and Development Committee which so effectively brought together educational research and development.

Overall, then, the responsiveness and responsibility mechanisms which Wilenski cites as necessary 'checks' to ensure that policies reflect community viewpoints and are subject to public scrutiny are, I would argue, to some extent present in our state education systems already. I am sure that my colleagues in non-state systems would argue with equal vehemence that their systems, too, reflect the views of their communities, albeit these might represent a narrower section of society at large.

My conclusions are that the Australian education scene is pluralistic and incremental and that it is difficult to separate with any degree of clarity the various parties who make policy in education. In most states of Australia, indeed, I suspect all, and at the federal level, policy-making is achieved by consensus. To achieve this consensus, there is typically not only wide consultation by governments who are finally responsible for the decision, but, also, a formal involvement of interested organisations and individuals through the commissions, committees, enquiries and advisory groups which comprise the educational network. Certainly, there are those who have greater influence on the formulation of policies than others and senior educational administrators are among these. They exert considerable influence on the formation of policies and on the course of their development and execution. But what they exercise is still influence and not power, which always resides with government.

Is There a Better Way?

I suspect that this paper should end here but I should like to take the liberty of adding one more section which might well be considered to be beyond my brief.

I wish to bring to the attention of this conference Yehezkel Dror's notion of *Think Tanks* or, if you prefer jargon, *Policy Review Organisations.*[18] Dror predicates his ideas on a proposition which on the basis of what has been said already, I cannot unreservedly accept as true of education in Australia. He believes that, despite delusions to the contrary, modern governments are not fundamentally different from classical Chinese machinery of state in their dependence on a few rulers and their advisors interacting with quasi-professional bureaucracies. The one novel feature of modern governments, namely, representative mass democracy combined with a distinct career-group of politicians, makes the tasks of government only more demanding and

difficult. Advances in technology, especially in communications and information processing provide some limited help, but no breakthroughs have occurred to assist governments to solve problems. They continue to be constrained by inherent limits upon those who govern, politics, organisations and mass behaviour.

Accordingly, he argues that new inventions of government are urgently needed, and he advocates the establishment of 'Think Tanks'. The essence of a 'Think Tank' is the attainment of excellence by applying full time, interdisciplinary, scientific thinking to fundamental improvements in policy making. This differentiates them from other policy-oriented structures such as parties, interest groups and regular public administration agencies which are based upon pragmatism, rather than science. Think Tanks should comprise some fifteen to twenty professionals only from at least five to six disciplines, including a few outstanding scientific thinkers, working in open-ended teams on at least three to four policy issues. Their tools are brains, papers and computers.

It has been said that there are no embarrassing questions, only embarrassing answers. And so it is with Think Tanks. To make a significant contribution to policy making, as well as to avoid corruption of the science base of their work, Think Tanks must be free, not only in arriving at their findings, but in formulating and reformulating the questions on which they are working. Reconsideration of basic policies rather than more efficient implementation of doubtful present policies, is the main function of such groups. Exposing fallacies in accepted assumptions and identifying innovative and clearly superior policy designs are important contributions from Think Tanks. They can also be quite unpleasant and counter-productive to politicians and bureaucrats alike. They damage esteem, provide weapons to oppositions and discredit agencies and practices. This, too, is not new to researchers, and again, like researchers, if Think Tanks don't come up with innovative ideas, they are accused of wasting money and effort; if they do succeed in advocating new ideas which contradict established practices, they may be seen to attack what the organisations have done and what they stand for.

I believe that some form of Think Tank is worth considering for Australian education. If suitably encouraged and developed, it could make significant contributions to fundamental policy making.

Conclusion

In conclusion, who makes educational policy in Australia? Clearly, I believe that governments do. They do not do so arrogantly nor capriciously but with an ear to the advice of as many as possible within limits that are set by time, economics and politics.

I have suggested that we should consider the need to ensure that the bureaucrats who play an important role in this decision making process should be given greater freedom and responsibility to inform the public about educational matters of public interest.

Finally, I have suggested that we should not ignore the need to ensure that the process of decision making keeps pace with the demands of our changing society and to seek out better methods of achieving these ends. Minister Hacker sums up the present process thus:

> Open Government is rather like the live theatre: the audience gets a performance. And it gives a response. But, like the theatre, in order to have something to show openly, there must first be much hidden activity. And all sorts of things have to be cut or altered in rehearsals, and not shown to the public until you have got them right.[19]

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND POLICY FORMATION IN EDUCATION

EDWARD A. HOLDAWAY

Introduction

Several colleagues in both Australia and Canada have told me that any paper on the topic of the relationship between research and policy formation in education should not take long. They probably were referring to the lack of direct causal linkages between research and policy. If this paper were to deal only with such causal linkages, then it would indeed be short. However, a great deal has been written on the topic of the *relationship* between these two processes. This is the approach commonly taken in this paper rather than merely discussing the matter of direct impact of research findings upon policy. I am not going to discuss the research-practice relationship in any detail, although obviously a close association exists between policy and practice in this regard as evidenced by the policies and practices involved in the use of psychological tests developed through research activities.

Frequent mention was made in the literature of various Western countries during the 1970's of the need to examine both the research-practice and research-policy relationships as part of the 'research-on-research' enterprise. Several 'research-policy' activities were conducted in that period including the following:

(1) the holding of a conference, jointly sponsored by the Canadian Education Association and the Canadian Educational Researchers' Association, on the research-policy relationship in Calgary in 1977;

(2) the funding by the Social Science Research Council of Great Britain in 1978 of a project, conducted by Professor John Nisbet, to examine the topic of the impact of research on policy and practice;

(3) the publication in 1978 by the U.S. National Academy of Education of the *Impact of Research on Education: Some Case Studies,* edited by Patrick Suppes; and

(4) the publication in 1979 by the Australian Council for Educational Research of *Educational Research for Policy Making in Australia,* edited by John Shellard.

The content of this paper has to a large extent been drawn from these four activities.

Definitions and Elaborations

At this stage, certain key terms — research, basic research, applied research, evaluation, development, policy and relationship — require definition and elaboration. The first four definitions have been taken from *Project Score* of the Commonwealth Department of Education as cited by Radford and McDowell (1973:11).

Research

'*Research* is systematic critical investigation directed toward increasing the general body of knowledge or understanding of the subject studied'. Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:42) state that a range of activities is covered by the term 'educational research' — 'short-term projects to solve specific problems, data-gathering surveys, trouble shooting, longitudinal studies to chart patterns of growth, theoretical, analytical, historical, comparative research . . . intervention programmes, action research, innovation, development . . . and evaluation . . .'. To add to this complexity, Nisbet and Broadfoot identify 'a range of methodologies, from precise measurement and rigorous design to interpretive and naturalistic studies'.

'*Basic research* is original investigation where the primary aim of the investigator is a fuller knowledge or understanding of the subject under study'. It is classified as either 'pure basic' or 'oriented basic' by the *Project Score* team.

'*Applied research* is original investigation of recognised practical problems'. The distinction between basic and applied research is often nebulous and frequently decried, but placement of these 'pure types' on either end of a continuum helps to clarify and classify various types of research. The question then becomes: 'To what *extent* is this research applied?' rather than 'Is this research pure *or* applied?'

Figure 1. A Continuum of Pure-Applied Research

Pure basic research	Oriented basic research	Pure applied research
0% applied		100% applied

Development

'Development is the systematic use or adaption of the results of basic and applied research directed towards the introduction of useful materials, devices, products, processes, procedures, systems or methods, or the improvement of existing ones.'

Evaluation

'Evaluation' is defined as an assessment of the effectiveness of a particular program or activity by comparison of a performance with a criterion or criteria. The evaluation process in education usually includes some research activity which provides information for measurement of performance. Research may also be involved in providing input for development of the criteria.

Relationship

The term 'relationship' has frquently been used rather than the more common terms 'contribution' and 'impact' to indicate that the research-policy linkage is interactive rather than one-way causal. Don Anderson (1981:16) says that theory-based research can never be the basis for policy-making: rather, the reverse applies, that from action we gain insights into the nature of processes.

Policy

Policy consists of either official statements which appear in legislation, regulations and other documents, or unwritten understandings, which direct and/or guide the actions of personnel. Baumgart and Low (1979:79) see policies as generalizations involving organizational goals and the means of achieving goals via structures, operations and resource-allocation. Similarly, policies are perceived by Mosychuk and Blowers (1978:77) as providing a frame of reference for decision-making.

Four kinds of policy statements with examples are identified by McDonald (1976:7-8):

Kinds of Policy Statement	**Example**
(1) Statement of a principle.	"Teacher education programs will be a mixture of theoretical and practical courses."
(2) Prescription of courses of action to guide decisions.	"Admission to a teacher education program will be based on demonstrated intellectual competence, appropriate academic preparation, and demonstrated ability to work with children."
(3) Specification of what is to be done and how to do it.	As in (2) but with additions about how evidence is to be supplied.
(4) Statement of objective and action to achieve that objective.	"A major goal of practical training for teaching is to learn the skills of managing groups of children; to achieve this goal each teacher education program in the state will provide . . . and will evaluate . . ."

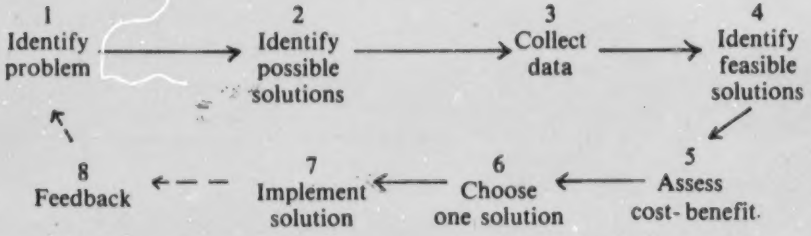
Policy-making Process

A definition of the policy-making process is provided by Albert Jones (1980:60), the former Director-General of Education for South Australia:

> Policy-making is the process whereby a formal statement of a change or reform governing future actions in an organisation is achieved by the decision-making process with some goal in mind.

The policy-making process can be demonstrated by reference to the decision-making sequence, which is often considered to be synonymous with the classical scientific method even though this diagrammatic representation frequently does not reflect reality.

Figure 2. The Decision-Making Process



Obviously, research and values can be highly involved in most steps. The involvement of values is supported by Rein (1976:140) who has stated that:

> . . . social policy is, above all, concerned with choice among competing values, and hence questions of what is morally or culturally desirable can never be excluded from the discussion.

Jones (1980:64) provides further support:

> At every step in the policy-making process the values held by the participants both formal and informal influence the final policy.

Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:47) perceive that ". . . values almost by definition are a major component of policy". Further, Selleck (1981:200-201) considers that "the policy-maker is at the centre of political, economic, social and personal pressures, ideological concerns, administrative exigencies, psychological difficulties".

The trend towards "democratization of the policy-making process" is noted by Parry (1979:11) who sees policy-makers in primary and secondary education as adapting the university approach with respect to use of expert committees and their reports. However, we should be aware that the nature of the policy-making process within primary and secondary education is different at different organization levels — ministerial, director-general, regional director, and principal/teachers.

Types of Policy Research

Policy research or policy-oriented research is described by Baumgart and Low (1979:80) as that which ". . . seeks to collect, analyse, and report information that will facilitate the making of policy decisions and/or the formulation of policy statements". They distinguish it from policy analysis, i.e. research on how policy is made. It can also be distinguished from research on how policies are implemented and from evaluation on the effectiveness of policies.

Concern over the "Research-Policy Gap"

Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:2-3) identify the failure of "the greatly increased investment in educational research and curriculum development" to meet "raised hopes and expectations" as a major source of concern in the U.K. over the research-policy gap. They also feel that "growing sophistication and self-awareness among educational researchers led to aspirations to hold an established place in the educational system" which were apparently not realised. Jack Wrigley (1976:4), a former Chairman of the British SSRC Education Research Board, states that ". . . social scientists must justify their research to a wider community if they are to continue to secure funds for their work".

Similar views are expressed in the U.S. For example, in the 1978-79 Report of the U.S. National Council on Educational Research, the Chairman, John Corbally (1980:1), states that the brunt of concerns raised by members of Congress, their staff and interested groups after the first year of existence of the National Institute of Education was "You spent all of that money (around $140 million in the first 'golden year') and the schools still aren't any better."

In order to understand more clearly the impact of social science research findings on policy and so focus attention upon the formulation of educational policies by U.S. State legislatures, the National Institute of Education funded a study by Mitchell and others (Mitchell, 1980) who collected data from 160 "key legislative policy influentials" in three states: their conclusions are presented later in this paper. Holden (1981:1398) observed that:

> a lot of people are making lists to demonstrate all the ways social and behavioral research has contributed to society, and paying special attention to two of the Reagan Administration's favorite subjects: productivity and innovation.

In Canada, very pointed questions have been asked in provincial governments and the media about research and its funding. In response to these pressures, the Social Science Federation of Canada contacted 160 university department chairmen across Canada in 1980 requesting that they provide examples of the importance and contribution of selected research projects.

Similar concerns have been expressed in New Zealand. For example, Geraldine McDonald, in her 1980 NZARE Presidential Address, remarked that:

> Nevertheless there appears to be a strong urge both in New Zealand and in countries other than our own to try to bring research and policy into a closer relationship, to bring relevant research to the attention of those who make decisions, to understand the problems of decision makers, and to analyse the processes by which policy is determined.

Such overseas concerns, opinions and practices have not passed unnoticed in Australia. Since 1977, ACER has undertaken a research program in social foundations of education "specifically designed to inform social policy decisions" (Australian Council for Educational Research, 1980:30). This research program consists of three groups of studies: (1) evaluation studies of

selected policies and programs; (2) transition from school to adult life; and (3) allocation of staff and resources to schools. ACER feels that such research contributes evidence to assist decision-making as well as analysing and understanding the issues being considered.

General Aspects of the Research-Policy Relationship

Early in this discussion, the complexity of the relationship between research and policy must be recognised: as Foster (1979:93) states ". . . there is an increasing recognition that the interface between empirical findings and actual policy implementation is a good deal more complex than had at first been supposed". The minimal effect of educational research on policy is highlighted by Cronin (1978:20) who concludes that "educational policy has been determined as a result of economic and political forces." In a Council of Europe publication (Ministry of Education, 1979:6-7), the relationship between educational research and policy making in France is described in this way: educational research is encouraged and its contribution is appreciated, but policy makers "tend to regard it as a marginal activity".

However, the relationship is far from clear. Baumgart and Low (1979:77) make this assessment:

> On the one hand, those responsible for educational policy formation and decision making at the system level have expressed disappointment that researchers have failed to deliver the kind of research findings relevant to crucial decisions. On the other hand, some educational researchers have felt frustrated when, for whatever reason, their research has had little impact on important educational policies and decisions.

Similarly, Rist (1976:264), in writing about the situation in Washington, D.C., concludes that:

> A growing hiatus has emerged between the maturing sophistication of the policy makers as to the kinds of information they require and the continued nonconcerted and noncumulative efforts of university based researchers.

On the other hand, Glaser and Cooley (1978:viii) are more positive:

> There is a growing demand among educational administrators, teachers, and state departments of education for analytical and evaluative research on school problems. And, there is increased attention by behavioral and social scientists to research areas relevant to individual learning, teaching materials and practices, and the design of classroom environments.

They see the major problem to be the establishment of focused research priorities.

Dunn (1981:3) obviously agrees with Glaser and Cooley:

> The operational agencies of the formal system at both Commonwealth and State levels need their own machinery for data gathering, policy analysis and policy monitoring if information for their decision making is to be available in an appropriate form when needed.

But Higgins *et al.* (1979:110) observe that we cannot provide the basic information needed by policy makers, citing the examples of (a) a lack of evidence about educational standards during a debate in the late 1970's; and (b) "the failure to predict earlier the current oversupply of teachers . . ." This is not a result of politicians and administrators being unable to state priority policy/problem areas as we have considerable evidence of such activity. For example, Cronin (1978:22-23) states that research to assist policy making is needed on these issues — desegregation/integration/busing; finance; declining enrolments; stopouts/dropouts/pushouts; responsibility education to counter discipline, crime and truancy problems; and staff development. Further, in a November 1981 speech to AARE, the S.A. Minister, Mr H. Allison, identified declining enrolment, lack of promotion opportunities, post-school transition, and resource allocation.

Consequently, we can assess the current position as one in which great need exists for research findings to assist policy formation. But the promise has not been fulfilled. As Inger Marklund (1981:14) has succinctly stated:

> Perhaps the greatest paradox of all is that, at the same time as more and more is being banked on R & D at the political level, confidence in the problem solving capacity of R & D is declining.

The existence of a 'chicken and egg' situation in this regard is noted by Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:45). Research lacks impact because it is underdeveloped, but its lack of direct use contributes to continuing underdevelopment.

The General Contribution of Educational Research

Three levels of impact of research are identified by Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:20-21):

(1) *Immediate or direct impact* — this is perceived to be rare except when topics are non-controversial and values are not challenged. Taylor (1981:190) considers that research which has the strongest short-term impact may not have the greatest long-term influence, but its publicity could generate further studies which advance knowledge and improve the rationality of decision-making.

(2) *Intermediate impact* — this occurs with evaluation and developmental work, which is seldom published, and which obtains its original impetus from research.

(3) *Long-term indirect impact* — Nisbet and Broadfoot see this impact as that which ". . . influences the climate of opinion" and conclude that it ". . . is increasingly recognised in the literature as the most important and far-reaching". They cite Weiss who assesses that the major influence of research is sensitising, changing perceptions and restating problems, and that research has a cumulative effect. The following quotations all address the same general issue:

> The more research we have, the more evident it is that we have fewer definitive answers, while questions tend to become more numerous and exact in the process. Issues get clarified and sharpened, they fade away or emerge. New insights are

developed as old assumptions are challenged. In all, it makes us more rational about the implications of the issues and the alternatives. (Cronin, 1978:20).

It is through its contribution to this *climate of opinion* that educational research probably has its most profound effect. Thus, though an individual piece of research may have little effect, research *cumulatively* may have a great deal. (Powell, 1980:2).

Research findings can sharpen the areas of disagreement, make the issues more uncertain, complex and technical; and as a result the contribution of social science seems more remote. (Rein, 1976:12).

Indeed, it is possible to argue that it is precisely the function of researchers to add to the range of models and concepts and thus reveal the essential ambiguity, complexity and contradictions of the world around us. The researcher's task is not to decide but to expose the range of phenomena so that the democratic system can make its choice of which perception it wants to follow. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:42).

Educational research can serve to sharpen perceptions, to stimulate discussion, and to encourage questioning — and thus to create the possibility of change and improvement of the system. (Power, 1981:14).

After reading these opinions, the findings of a study by Caplan *et al.* (1975:x-xi) are relevant and of interest. Educational administrators in government in the U.S. were asked to indicate the value of social science in their work: the following rank order was obtained:

1. sensitizing policy makers to social needs;
2. evaluating existing programs;
3. structuring alternative policies;
4. implementing policies;
5. justifying policy decisions; and
6. choosing among policy alternatives.

The Value of Basic Research in Policy Formation

Many social scientists have extolled the value of basic research, but only a few have attempted to relate the findings of basic research to the adoption of educational policies. Getzels (1978) provides one of the best-known examples of such attempts. He categorically rejects the view that basic research is irrelevant to the broad educational problems. In Getzel's view (1978:487-488), basic research has a cumulative effect that alters our conceptions, paradigms, and in turn our approaches to problems as revealed in policies. He uses the changes in school architecture as one example, along with discussion of gifted children and professional preparation of administrators, to show how theory-oriented research influenced policy: our conceptions of 'the learner' led to alterations in classroom design. However, not all authorities accept Getzel's case. Whereas Gideonse (1981:128) feels that Getzels has made an effective presentation, Selleck (1981:198-199) views Getzels' claims as unconvincing.

In New Zealand, Nuthall (1975:4-5) states that "official policy still seems to be that unguided personal judgement, intuition and hearsay are appropriate sources of information on which to make policy decisions". He consequently pleads for more basic explanatory research stating that "In the long run, explanatory research is the only kind which provides knowledge of general and lasting value." Similarly, Gallagher and Sanders (1976:1-2) state that abstract theories that describe interrelationships with implications for many different problems and which rely on prior research are the most practical and economical. Further support comes from Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:52):

> The research which has had most influence, in the opinion of some, has been the academic work which generated new concepts or new interpretations or reformulated problems, rather than work related to policy or its implementation in practice, where impact generally has been slight.

In response to the Reagan Administration's proposal to reduce the annual grants for Social and Economic Sciences (a division of the National Science Foundation) from $31m to $10m in 1982, Mosteller (1981) offers this defence:

> We know that innovations, social, medical and technological, often fail and that they therefore need evaluation. Social science research provides both the tools and the data for such evaluations. More constructively, it often provides the research to improve the success rates of future innovations.

Examples of Policy with Little Obvious Research Base

Educational policy statements which have little obvious direct relationship with research findings are readily found in Australia, as well as in other countries. For example, the recent publication of the Education Department of South Australia entitled *Into the 80s* contains the following policy statements:

> In addition to fostering intellectual development, schools will aim to provide a balance of social, physical, emotional and moral development for their students.
>
> Within the policies, planning frameworks, curriculum areas and subject guidelines which it provides, the Education Department will encourage schools to determine their educational programmes.
>
> Schools will encourage the understanding and appreciation of different cultures and ethnic groups. This will be reflected in both the school environment and the educational programme.

The citing of such examples does not mean that research findings have had no effect on these policies, but that this effect is not obvious and is probably indirect. Of course there is no implication that Education Departments are not entitled to establish policies which are determined mostly by values.

In an overview of some major Australian educational policies, Dunn (1979:22) identifies those at both government and departmental levels which had little obvious research basis. These include state aid to non-government schools, assistance to build science laboratories and libraries, the Commonwealth Secondary Scholarship Examinations, the N.S.W. Education

Commission, open-classroom schools, school-based curriculum development, and new mathematics. Power (1981:13) adds the establishment of the Schools Commission and the recent cuts in levels of funding for tertiary education.

Similar situations appear to exist in many countries. For example, Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:29) cite Legrand's work, concerning the situation in France, which:

> . . . describes a series of major innovations taken with no recourse to research and reveals that even where a research project is initiated it is often overtaken by a decision before its completion or is confined to *post-hoc* evaluation.

Influence of Politicians and Directors-General

We need to recognise in this debate the importance of politicians and state directors-general of education in the making of policy. In this regard, some valuable insights are provided in the eight monographs of the University of Melbourne project entitled *The Education Policy Process at State Level: An Australia-United States Comparative Study* (Project Directors, G.S. Harman and F.M. Wirt). In the N.S.W. monograph, Hogan and West (1980:42-43) state that "In the area of education many initiatives come from the Premier himself rather than his Department . . . The decision that special emphasis should be given to the teaching of ethnic or community languages seems to have been of this kind." They conclude that "Typically this personal intervention of the Premier will involve policy areas which he sees to have some likely electoral importance." The influence of departments other than Education in the setting of educational policy is exemplified in the staffing policy decided by the Premier's Department for the whole public service in N.S.W. Hogan and West also note that the Premier's staff is interested in developments in the Labor Party and pressure groups as well as in the public image of the Government's position on controversial issues.

For Western Australia, Smart and Alderson (1980:109-110) draw these conclusions:

(1) The traditional centrality of the Director-General in the policy process continues, but it has been eroded by the need "to take greater cognisance of the views of teachers, parents, the public, the media, political parties, parliament and his minister".

(2) Ministers of Education have become more involved in the policy-making process.

(3) ". . . a few key individuals seem to have been responsible for an inordinately large number of the major policy decisions".

In the Tasmanian monograph, R. Selby-Smith (1980:85) presents accounts of different decision-making processes used in three policy areas. First, the policy to establish matriculation colleges was decided by the Minister after receiving advice. Second, the policy on the maximum size of primary schools was decided by the Director-General of Education, also after receiving advice. Third, important policies on the future of post-secondary education were

decided by the Minister, and probably by the Premier and Labor Caucus, likely on the basis of political advantage because the recommendations of four committees of enquiry were disregarded.

Jones (1980:33) has made this assessment for South Australia: ". . . ministers of education have been initiators and contributors to educational policy apart from merely giving legal authority to any policy decision." He mentions that in the early 1960s, the S.A. Learn-to-Swim Campaign and the teaching of Malay were originally the ideas of the Minister of Education.

Examples of 'Successful' Committees of Enquiry and Research Projects

One outstanding example of a 'commission' which influenced policy and practice is provided by the 1957 Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales, with H.S. Wyndham as chairman. As Crittenden (1981:30) states, the report of the Wyndham Committee ". . . was adopted as the blueprint which has shaped the work of the secondary schools in that State during the past two decades." Two other examples are identified by Jones (1980:11 and 58) — the Karmel Committee which enquired into education in South Australia and the 1973 Steinle Health Education Report. In the latter example, Jones states that the Committee was specifically established ". . . to firm up on policy for the schools in health education" and its recommendations were immediately approved as government policy.

Gordon MacMurchy (1978:5), a former Minister of Education for Saskatchewan, perceives that three useful types of government commission exist: open-ended, problem-solving and idea-testing. Mosychuk and Blowers (1978:80) cite the conclusion of H.E. Gillies of the Ontario Ministry of Education:

> A recent analysis done in Ontario indicated that of the educational research funded by the Ministry of Education there was firm documentation that 98 percent of that research had made substantial impact in the area of policy formulation and decision-making.

A further Canadian example is provided by Egnatoff (1978:9), who refers to the decision of the Saskatoon Public School Board to restrict open-area space in schools to 25 percent of the total in any school — this policy change resulted from a survey of experience with open-area schools. Dunn (1979:22) also mentions the example of evaluation affecting the policies on open-classroom schools in Australia; he further states that evaluation led to disbanding of the Commonwealth Secondary Scholarship Examinations Scheme.

An American example of how research can substantially affect educational policy is found in the work of James Coleman. Foster (1979:98) makes this assessment:

> The policy implications of this kind of research have, indeed, been of great significance in the United States, for recently there has been less concern with equalizing financial inputs in terms of conventional items such as teacher

qualifications, library facilities, etc. and a greater interest in pre-school or compensatory programs that would attempt to minimise the influence of familial variables on achievement.

Inger Marklund (1981:10) provides a Swedish example: ". . . R & D activities in the field of remedial education can be said to have had a distinct impact in relation to educational practice and discussion."

However, not all commissions have directly affected policy, as shown in the following narrative. In order to assist in settling a long strike by teachers in 1980 in Calgary, Alberta, the provincial government appointed a Fact-Finding Commission consisting of three highly experienced university educators (Kratzmann, Byrne and Worth, 1980). The first recommendation of this Commission was that, over a three-year period, provincial funding to school districts should allow them to achieve an average instructional work week of 20 hours for each teacher and an average ratio of 20 pupils per teacher, exclusive of in-school administrators. The Commission had access to research which seemed to support contrary views, i.e., smaller classes were associated either with improved student performance or with no difference in performance. After considering various factors, including the economic base of the province, the Commission concluded that the 20/20 target was "both necessary and reasonable". Predictably, the Minister of Education held a contrary view. So although this Commission helped to end the strike, its impact upon policy has to date been minimal.

Explanations Why Educational Research has Varying Impacts Upon Policy

Many writers have provided explanations as to why educational research has not had the impact upon policy formation that has been considered to be desirable. References which support the explanations are included when considered appropriate. Some elaboration of especially significant explanations has been provided.

Related to Characteristics of Policy Makers

(1) The time that policy makers have held their positions can influence their attitudes towards the need to consider research findings. (Worth, 1978:3).

(2) Policy makers differ in their personal orientation towards research as an activity. (Worth, 1978:4).

(3) Policy makers differ in their readiness to consider change in policies. (S. Marklund, 1973).

(4) Administrators who are interested in maintaining the smooth running of an organization are likely to resist research which challenges their policies, authority and judgments. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:48).

(5) The experience, values and personality affect the extent to which research findings are influential. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:47).

(6) Some policy makers may use research as a means of containment of further change especially when funds are limited. (Worth, 1978:3).

(7) Administrators and politicians may use research "as an instrument of power and political positioning." (Worth, 1978:3).

Related to Constraints on Policy Makers

(1) Policy makers often need to make decisions rapidly, so research findings must be made available quickly if they are to be used. This aspect is referred to by many authors: some selected relevant quotations follow.

> Researchers frequently respond to immediate problems and neglect likely future problems. (Start, 1975:327).
>
> Decisions made by state education agencies and state boards of education are most often in response to political pressures and in tight time frames. (Cronin, 1976:20).
>
> Also major research may take three to five years to complete and it is difficult to predict what the policy issues will be so far ahead. An ERDC report on teacher morale concerned with why teachers were leaving the service was completed and published just when the resignation rates dropped dramatically and the surplus of teachers became evident. (Dunn, 1979:23).
>
> In any case, it often takes considerable time for a researcher to work on a problem, and when his results become available the problem may have changed or the policy maker may have new priorities. (Selleck, 1981:200).
>
> Changes of policy priorities over time are a major factor in the impact of research. Research takes years; yet policy makers cannot even wait six months for information because doing nothing is itself a decision. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:47).
>
> It is equally impossible for policy makers to predict the kind of information they are likely to need in five years time, or the issues that will be dominant in order to commission appropriate research in advance. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:48).

(2) Policy makers need to consider the economic and political feasibility of proposed solutions to problems and not just the research findings. This finds support from Start (1974:331); from Sixten Marklund (1973) who stated that social and economic considerations are likely to be decisive; and from Power (1981:12) who concluded that ". . . at best research movements have played only a relatively minor role in comparison with the economic, social and political forces which led to the policies from which such acts were derived."

(3) Policy makers, especially Ministers of Education, frequently have limited tenure in their positions. Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:48) illustrate this aspect by recording that Great Britain has had thirty Ministers of Education since 1945.

(4) Policy makers have to steer "an uneasy course between conflicting pressures." (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:33).

Related to Differences in the Research and Policy Communities

(1) Researchers and policy makers frequently have different and conflicting values, so their responses to research findings are different. (Start, 1975:326).

(2) Researchers and policy makers have different reward systems, reference groups and role perceptions. (Selleck, 1981:200).

(3) Researchers and policy makers frequently use different vocabulary, thereby reducing the effectiveness of their communication. (Start, 1975:328).

(4) Researchers have unrealistic expectations concerning the impact of research on policy. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:19).

This proposition receives support from many other writers. For example, Rein (1976:107) states that the influence of research is inhibited because of difficulties in ". . . reconciling the ideals of democracy with those of impartial rationality."

Similarly, Whitworth (1970:3), a former Director of the Canadian Council for Research in Education, made this assessment:

> Most research studies are directed towards predicting how phenomena will interact under specified conditions. Such findings must be translated into action in a variety of unique situations where this knowledge, as it changes the ongoing process to some degree, will inevitably conflict with value systems and vested interests.

Related to the Nature of the Research Enterprise

(1) A wide variety of activities is included under the label of "educational research": different sorts of research activities can relate more or less closely to policy. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:42).

(2) Educational research is sponsored in various ways by various organisations which have different expectations.

(3) The research enterprise is discredited by failure to define expectations. (S. Marklund, 1973).

(4) Policy makers have difficulty in deciding what the research findings actually tell them: educational research is rarely policy-oriented. (Averch *et al.*, 1972:1).

(5) Replication of research projects frequently leads to different results which lead policy makers to view research rather negatively; if similar findings are obtained, policy makers tend to have more confidence in the research. Educational policy cannot rely on any one study. (Averch *et al.*, 1972:2; S. Marklund, 1973).

(6) Researchers can usually only effectively research existing practice: they cannot conduct research on educational proposals unless they are in pilot form. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:47).

(7) Greater emphasis upon qualitative research can lead to less useful findings. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:42).

(8) The research methodology of particular projects can be perceived to have weaknesses. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:19).

(9) "Research brings relevant information rather than uniquely exclusive conclusions." (Halsey, 1972, cited in Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:27).

(10) The many diverse streams of educational research are not properly connected. (Averch *et al.*, 1972:1).

(11) Long-term impact is hindered if research is directed towards contemporary problems. (Kerlinger, 1977:5).

Related to Research Findings

(1) The information provided by the researcher is too narrow, particularly because too few variables have been considered.

(2) The findings of similar research projects are often contradictory. (Selleck, 1981:200; S. Marklund, 1973; Averch *et al.*, 1972:2). This difficulty relates to the extent to which research studies and findings must be replicated before a policy-maker can have confidence in them as a basis for action. In addressing this matter, Keeves (1979:65) states that a substantial body of research evidence, based on several studies and related to "sound theoretical perspectives", should be available before educational policies are changed. Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:42-45) also deal with this matter of replication, and point out that contradictory findings can often result as occurred when Rutter's more sensitive techniques contradicted Coleman's assertion that "Schools don't make a difference". They assess that impact is most likely to occur when iterative, cumulative research leads to findings in the same direction. However, they point out a dilemma in that policy makers want replication, but in so doing researchers run the risk of obtaining contradictory results which are inconclusive and discrediting.

(3) Findings frequently have some vested interest, bias or prejudice attached. (Parry, 1979:12).

(4) The findings are often equivocal and the limitations of the study are identified in such a way that clear guidelines for policy are not available. (Start, 1975:328).

(5) Research findings are usually disseminated in forms which are not heeded by major policy makers. (Start, 1975:328).

(6) The magnitude of research literature means that a policy maker cannot readily keep up-to-date. (Averch *et al.*, 1972:1).

(7) The responses to research findings are never solely intellectual: because responses are emotional and role-related, distortion can easily result. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:44).

(8) Policy makers have difficulty in ascertaining when confidence can be placed in findings as a guide for action. When practitioners attempt to use research findings as a guide for action, they frequently ask 'What do the findings of this research project actually tell us?' Findings of statistical significance, which inform us that we have confidence that results obtained with a representative sample are likely to be found in the population from which the sample was drawn, are of little value to the policy maker. 'Statistical significance' is different from 'substantial significance'. Specifically, we can ask how much difference in means, or how high a correlation, is needed in order for a decision to be reached about introducing change? As Rein (1976:12) has stated, "The crucial matters in a policy debate are not so much matters of fact as questions of interpretation."

Related to Other Matters

(1) Different research-funding policies and different levels of research support exist in different countries, giving rise to different expectations about the research-policy link. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:30).

(2) Research may be more involved in legitimating policy than in affecting it. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:47).

(3) Insufficient interaction occurs between researchers and policy makers. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:19).

(4) Policy making tends to be disorganized and haphazard. (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:47).

(5) The social events with which research is involved are very complex. (Rein, 1976:107).

(6) The public lacks confidence in educational research. Chipman (1981:4) makes the following assessment: "The crisis of confidence in public education extends, most importantly, to suspicion of both the quality and the integrity of its publicly funded research and ideas centres".

Means by which Educational Research Could More Effectively Influence Policy Making

While proposing that research and policy have an interactive relationship and that this relationship usually is not linear, nevertheless the need to base some policy decisions more upon sound research is well accepted. Some of these 'solutions' are described below.

Mutual confidence must be developed between researchers and policy makers: this requires that ". . . the researcher must demonstrate his awareness of the economic and political implications of his work" (R.W.B. Jackson, cited in Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:17). In similar vein, Corbally (1980:1-2) sees the challenge for researchers being to win "patience and support" from federal and state governments and "respect and co-operation" from local educators and school board members. Corbally also perceives that ". . . findings must go into an environment where they can and will be welcomed and used", as occurs with research in agriculture. This aspect is closely related to more collaboration and consultation between researchers and administrators as advocated by Cronin (1978:24) and Higgins *et al* (1979:116), and practised in Sweden as described by Husen (1978:525-531). Husen cautions that good liaison requires that researchers should not become evangelists who scare policy makers into withdrawing their support.

Another approach is proposed by Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:66) who advocate that "the solution" lies in understanding the possible relationships among research policy and practice. Mitchell (1980:19) goes somewhat further in proposing that the development of advocacy for policy solutions be recognised as a *political* process and that systematic efforts should be made to involve scientific analysis earlier in the policy process. After discussing the recent approach of Dockrell and Hamilton in *Re-thinking Educational Research*, Selleck (1981:201) concludes that they would like to see more creative and meaningful educational research, with less emphasis upon conventional scientific approaches. This view is supported by Slavin (1978:17) who, in opposing Kerlinger's advocacy of more basic research, recommends that we should expand our applied research activities.

In some countries, a trend towards funding basic-oriented or thematic research has occurred. For example, the Social Sciences and Humanities

Research Council of Canada implemented thematic research grants in 1979 with the first theme being "Aging". Other themes being considered in 1980 were Adolescence, Literacy and Language, Resource Management, Decision Making at the Policy Level, Canadian Studies, the Role of Third Cultures, and Northern Development and Regional Disparities. The recently formed New Zealand Social Sciences Research Committee has adopted a similar approach which relies on the expectation that a somewhat concentrated research effort can assist policy makers to make more appropriate decisions about social problems. Inger Marklund (1981:15) concludes that R & D must continue to be problem-oriented, but we have to eliminate the expectation ". . . .that R & D will provide *the* solution to *the* problem". Another suggestion is offered by Cronin (1978:20) who advocates formation of coalitions of policy researchers from the different disciplines whose research affects educational policy — economics, psychology and sociology. Cronin feels that this approach would "maximise the objectivity and usefulness of policy research in education."

A specific suggestion for the Australian scene is proposed by Higgins *et al.* (1979:117). They consider that policy analysts, who would be employed in an Australian "clearing house" on educational research, would convert research findings into a form useful to policy makers.

The development of a better understanding of and a closer orientation to the policy-making process by researchers is proposed by Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:52) who address this matter in stating that ". . . unless research shares some of the perspectives of the policy maker and practitioner, the insights it has to offer will not readily be recognised". An even more direct proposal comes from Higgins *et al.* (1979:17):

> Research workers should give deliberate consideration to the policy implications of their work, and communicate these not only in academic papers and technical reports but also in summary statements and in forms most useful to policy makers.

McDonald (1976:1-2) feels that consideration of policy implications should pervade the work of educational researchers, and advocates what many researchers would feel is too extreme a position: "My view is that the policy alternatives available to the policy makers should be carefully laid out as a first step in planning research."

More attention to appropriate dissemination is advocated by several authors. For example, Inger Marklund (1981:12-14) suggests that the format of research findings should be improved and that the information and forms of dissemination be adjusted for different groups. She also feels that more attention should be paid to dissemination in the project planning, especially with respect to inclusion of funds for this activity. Stake, as reported by Selleck (1981:202), proposes that a more personal form of report writing be adopted when reports are sent to policy makers.

The need to relate problems and findings to a theoretical framework also receives attention. Sixten Marklund (1973) feels that practical problems should be redefined as discipline problems to be researched. Further, Rein (1976:107) considers that "all knowledge must relate to a framework of interpretation, because only thus does any information make sense."

Comments on Australian Developments

As far as I can ascertain, the recently abolished Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC) was operating in accordance with many, if not most, of the principles identified by the experts cited above. Its disappearance is to be deeply regretted. Apparently the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) may soon suffer a similar fate. My regret at these developments, which will 'save' the Australian taxpayers only about $4m p.a., is compounded because I have advocated that Canada could with benefit adopt both types of body. Many North Americans who have visited Australia have been impressed by the operations of ERDC and CDC. Perhaps the recent experiences of both ERDC and CDC demonstrate eloquently that research cannot always sway policy decisions! I am certain that evaluations of the work of both agencies would generally be positive. Some findings from ERDC-funded studies have already been incorporated into educational policy (Connell *et al.*, 1981:4).

One example of the perceived value of ERDC is provided by the Report of the Australian National Inquiry into Teacher Education (Auchmuty, 1980:36) After stating that critical inquiry, analysis and development in teacher education is deficient in Australia, this inquiry advocated that:

> . . . the annual budget of the Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC) should be increased by $200,000 to enable it to mount a coordinated program of research and development in teacher education.

The demise of ERDC will probably also mean the disappearance of this hope for a vital R & D program, so policies related to the development of programs in teacher education will have less of a research base than is appropriate.

Other national developments also give some concern. For example, the absence of provision of funds for research by staff in CAE budgets (Fife: 1981) is short-sighted and unrealistic in view of their competence, needs and disciplines. The year-by-year funding of ACER, rather than rolling longer-term commitments, is undesirable. Colin Power's conclusion (1981:6) that "National faith in, and commitment to, education is at a dangerously low ebb" seems to be justified.

The important contributions of ERDC and CDC have been clearly described by Connell *et al.* (1981). Their views concerning federal activities are similar to those expressed earlier by Mary Berry (1977:4) when Assistant Secretary for Education in the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare:

> The federal role in educational R & D is not difficult to justify. Nationwide problems require a nationwide perspective in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to assure adequate coordination. Furthermore, State agencies and local school boards do not have the time, money or personnel to do what has to be done.

Without doubt, a need exists for a national body or bodies to undertake the following major functions:

(1) fund both basic and applied research;

(2) collect educational data relevant to policy decisions;

(3) act as a clearing house for information about R & D activities in Australia; and

(4) act as a storehouse for data collected during selected research projects.

At present, Australian Research Grants Commission, Australian Council for Educational Research, the Australian College of Education, the Australian Education Council, the universities, CAE's and state/territory/commonwealth departments are all involved in these functions. In view of the opinions of experts cited above, the parts of the Australian educational research enterprise that need boosting if policy development is to be optimal appear to be the funding of research and the collection of relevant data. ARGC probably cannot fill the void left by the disappearance of ERDC. With respect to relevant data, Parry (1979:14) feels that Australia requires bringing together of a group of acknowledged experts to publish analytical material to assist educational planning. He perceives ". . . that we have not been getting things right in terms of our research base to support policy making in tertiary education . . .", exemplifying this by the fact that the problem of the oversupply of trained teachers was allowed to develop so suddenly.

I am aware that several groups of educational administrators and researchers have approached the federal government expressing concern about ERDC and CDC. I wish to recommend that an approach be made again to the Federal Government for R & D support after a thorough analysis has been made of the needs of educational researchers, politicians and administrators. This will require examination of the work of people in state/territory/federal departments, universities, CAE's, ACER, CTEC, Schools Commission, etc.

Suggestions for Future Research

Several researchers have called for more research on the relationship between research and policy. Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:61) place such research in perspective by stating that ". . . 'research on research' is at a more rudimentary stage than even educational research in general." They make the following specific suggestions (Nisbet and Broadfoot, 1980:47,62):

(1) Test the widely held assumption that close cooperation between researchers and policy makers will improve the impact of research on policy.

(2) Study the organization of educational policy making.

(3) Identify policy areas where research has had, or has not had, significant impact.

(4) Identify influential and non-influential research publications.

(5) Study influential individuals and institutions. Higgins *et al.* (1978:106-107) support several of these suggestions and make this specific proposal:

> Research into the perceived and actual roles of researchers in administrative systems could define the extent of the problem and might well serve as a first step towards establishing researchers in more appropriate and effective roles relative to policy makers and to administrators in general.

Another suggestion is provided by Worth (1978:4) who sees merit in examining the extent to which research was used in policy formation during the life of an administration. Further, the information needs of policy makers at different stages of the policy-making process are worthy of study (G.S. Harman, personal communication).

Conclusion

In this paper, the following major positions were presented and discussed:

- international interest exists in the manner in which research is related to policy;
- the research-policy relationship is complex, particularly because different types of research exist, because policy statements of different types are made at different organisational levels, and because policy-making is not a standardized process;
- more research is being called for by policy makers at the same time that the value of such research is being questioned;
- all research, regardless of the extent to which it is 'applied', has potential for affecting policy;
- policies vary widely in the extent to which they have some research basis;
- a wide variety of explanations exists concerning why research has varying impacts upon policy;
- several measures can be undertaken to allow research to have more influence upon policy formation;
- efforts must continue in Australia to re-establish strong national educational R & D agencies.

Further, greater emphasis upon theoretical understandings appears to be warranted. Nisbet and Broadfoot (1980:55-59), who have made one of the most penetrating analyses of this topic, reached the following conclusion:

> Thus explanations of impact merely in terms of the 'state of the art' — the quality of its personnel, the size of its funding, the digestibility of its reports, the fragmentation of its participants — must be regarded as inadequate. Put another way, even if all these practical problems could be overcome tomorrow by some fairy godmother, the increase in impact would be relatively small.

Consequently, they advocated adoption of various theoretical perspectives — political science, policy studies, organisational studies and interactionist — to assist in our understanding with a view to increasing impact.

After considering the literature reviewed above on the relationship between research and policy formation, I feel that these propositions have considerable support:

(1) Individual research activities seldom produce major changes in policy: most major changes in policy result from socio-economic-political forces and personal sentiment which may or may not be associated with commissioned evaluation studies or reviews of educational research findings.

(2) Research can assist the policy-making process in clarifying issues, providing data, sensitizing administrators and politicians, providing conceptual analyses, and supporting the use of theoretical perspectives.

These statements are appropriately encapsulated in this quotation from a New Zealand Department of Education publication (1975:2): "The educational researcher is not Moses but a necessary travelling companion." That is, researchers cannot provide the policy, but they are an essential source of advice to those whose policy statements guide educational organizations.

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NATIONAL POLICY-MAKING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

Nearly all higher education institutions in Australia, the universities and colleges of advanced education, are public institutions established by governments. Most of them were established by state governments, but all are almost entirely supported by the Commonwealth government. As Commonwealth involvement has increased, so has the extent of national-level policy formation. Universities were the first educational sector for which national-level policies were regularly and systematically formulated. To a lesser extent, national policies have subsequently been formulated for advanced education, technical and further education, and school-level education. Since governments have the legislative and financial powers over higher education, they have dominated policy-making at the macro levels, and this paper will be largely devoted to an examination of this dominance.

However, before examining in detail the relation between government and the higher education system it is important to place this relationship in a broader context since policy formation is not simply determined by the power relationship and the interaction between these parties. The relationship between governments and higher education, which is quite complex in itself, exists within a complex political environment. Thus, in addition to the two levels of government and the range of institutions with different degrees of autonomy, there are many other influences and constraints operating on the relationship in multiple ways and at multiple levels.

Harman (1981) provides a useful overview of the political environment for higher education. He identifies five categories of influence: higher education interests (the student, teaching staff, and administrator organizations), professional groups, community groups (for example: church, minority, regional organizations), business and labour groups, and governments. These interest groups operate at all levels from the campus level where some are represented on institutional governing bodies, to the national level where pressure is generally directed towards governments. This national-level situation is a consequence of the use by the Commonwealth government of its financial power, and to a lesser extent, the use by the states of their legislative power, to control higher education. The sources of influence on government and the ways in which influence is exerted are a worthwhile subject for study, but in this paper, the examination will be focused on the relationship between governments and higher education and the effects this has had on policy-making.

A second preliminary point relates to the meaning of national policy. As a consequence of the ways in which the higher education system and the policy-making processes have developed, much of the discussion must be directed to the policy-making role of the Commonwealth and its agencies. Also, the actions of the Commonwealth have tended to indicate, despite some rhetoric to the contrary, that it has come to regard "Commonwealth" and "national"

as synonymous when dealing with higher education policy. Burn and Karmel (1977:62) and Neal (1979) have recognised the distinction: "Commonwealth" policies are those of the Commonwealth government, and "national" policies are those relating to national considerations and the "national interest", and are best developed by a cooperative effort between the Commonwealth and the states. The Australian Education Council and the Australian Universities Commission in the early 1960's are examples of mechanisms which have produced some national policies in this sense, demonstrating that alternatives to the current trend of Commonwealth dominance are possible. Neal, as a proponent of "states rights", regards Commonwealth dominance as dysfunctional, and makes a strong attack on the Commonwealth's assumption that responsibility for funding carries with it the sole rights to exercise or to delegate the decision-making powers relating to the use of the funds. Whether the Commonwealth's activities are seen as desirable or undesirable, it can be seen that, as with many other issues in Australian education, an examination of the role of governments in higher education policy-making must be undertaken within the context of Commonwealth-state relationships.

The Division of Powers

The division of powers between the Commonwealth and the States, compounded by the inconsistent delegation of powers from the State governments to the three types of educational institution, has been the major determinant of the present pattern of Australian higher education and the present arrangements for national-level policy-making. At the time of federation, the States retained their legislative powers over education and the constitution does not grant the Commonwealth specific legislative powers with respect to education except in its own territories and in the provision of benefits to students. However, as a result of the Commonwealth's extensive use of Section 96 grants to finance higher education the effective power of the States has been gradually reduced by the growing financial power of the Commonwealth. This has led to the paradox of ostensibly State institutions of higher education being almost entirely federally supported.

The basic distribution of powers has been further complicated by the inconsistent delegation of powers from the State governments to the higher education institutions, so that the two dimensional problem of Commonwealth-State relationships becomes a three dimensional interplay of forces at Commonwealth, State and institutional levels. In theory, the States have delegated certain powers to the institutions within each of the sectors. In brief, the pattern is as follows: universities are corporate bodies governed by councils charged with their entire control and management, while colleges of advanced education have similar autonomy in some respects, but in others are subject to the State minister for education and the relevant State coordinating body. This relatively small difference between the two higher education sectors has given rise to a number of coordination problems, but with the addition of a third sector, technical and further education (TAFE), such problems have been greatly multiplied since TAFE institutions are not constituted independently of the central state authority (a separate TAFE department or branch of the education department) which is the direct responsibility of the State minister for education.

In practice, the situation is even more complicated since, in addition to the Commonwealth's use of its financial power to negate the statutory powers of institutions, the basic delegations of powers are being increasingly infringed by the powers granted to State coordinating bodies. For example, despite acknowledgement of the special role of universities and their consequent need for a degree of autonomy, which has been given legislative substance in the university acts of incorporation, the State coordinating bodies (following the lead of the Commonwealth) have increasingly sought to gain control over the universities in order to incorporate university development within comprehensive State plans for tertiary education. Such State and Commonwealth coordination may be regarded as highly desirable, but such a belief should not obscure the potential dangers of the rather dubious mechanisms adopted to seek this goal. Perpetuating a basically unsound structure by additions which do not reduce the overall inconsistencies and which are not acceptable to all the parties involved, appears to be more likely to increase problems than to solve them.

The unbalanced and uncoordinated development which has taken place over the last 20 years is largely an outcome of the inconsistent division of powers. Lindsay and O'Byrne (1979) have argued that given the existing distribution of powers, there is no one participant, or combination of the participants in tertiary education, which has the management control of the national system and that consequently, the direction of events is determined not by planning but by the unmanageable interplay of forces at the national, state and institutional levels. The Commonwealth, the States, and the institutions, all exercise their powers to influence the development of the system. They have pursued different and sometimes conflicting objectives without any of them being able to achieve continued dominance in policy formation. Hence, development has taken place as the outcome of compromises and bargains, and so has been erratic, fragmentary and often unrelated to educational objectives. In recent years the Commonwealth has attempted to gain a dominant position through more direct use of its financial power. Whether this centralisation of power by the Commonwealth will provide an effective solution to these problems remains to be seen. Given the Commonwealth's past approach to planning, and the State and institutional reactions, it would be difficult to be optimistic. The inconsistent distribution of power and the piecemeal, uncoordinated system which has resulted from it, provide the context in which the role of governments and their agencies in the policy-making process must be examined.

Commonwealth Committees of Enquiry

The growth in the Commonwealth's involvement in higher education has coincided with a unique period of change and development. Commonwealth committees of enquiry have been instrumental in establishing the framework in which the changes occurred. The main role of the committees has been to provide the means for, and to legitimate, the education system's accommodation to changes in the external social, political, and economic forces. These forces and their implications for education have not remained constant and so each committee of enquiry has been faced with a different situation although basically the same task: the adaptation of the higher

education system to contemporary social, political and economic forces. At the time of the Murray and Martin Committees, economic growth, demographic pressures, and societal and individual aspirations, favoured an expansion of educational provision, while at the time of the Williams Committee, economic stagnation, reduced demographic pressure, and a reaction to education's increased share of gross domestic product, favoured a stable or declining level of educational provision.

The committees of enquiry have also played an important part in establishing the Commonwealth's control of higher education. They have fostered the Commonwealth's dominance and have also attempted to legitimate the Commonwealth's involvement in the absence of any specific legislative powers. While the Commonwealth's financial dominance and hence control in higher education have been established, the attempts to legitimate this increased power have been less successful. The Commonwealth's increased financial role has been readily accepted as inevitable by the States but they have not so readily relinquished their powers of policy formation and administration, and in response to the Commonwealth's accumulation and exercise of power through its statutory education commissions the States have established their own planning and coordinating authorities.

The importance of the legitimation role may be seen most clearly in relation to the Murray Committee. The specification of university needs and the basis for Commonwealth involvement had already been largely determined by the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee Report in 1952 on *The Crisis in the Finance and Development of Australian Universities* and by the Mills Committee in 1950. Also, the embryonic mechanism of the universities commission was already in existence following the Second World War. Hence, the major role of the Murray Committee was to ensure that the greatly increased Commonwealth participation necessary for the upgrading and expansion of university education would be seen to be desirable, appropriate, and in accord with due process.

The next major committee, chaired by Martin, was less concerned with legitimating the Commonwealth's involvement in higher education than with advocating and legitimating major changes in the direction and structure of Australian higher education. The establishment of the colleges of advanced education was one of the most important policy decisions in Australian education. In retrospect it appears to have been a mistake. Its significance was that it reaffirmed our adherence to British educational tradition with its relatively narrow and elite approach to universities, rather than, for example, reorienting our think towards the model provided by the more comprehensive university and college system in the United States which caters for a wide range of student abilities and fields of study. The decision encouraged the perpetuation of the belief that liberal and vocational education can be separated, and resulted in the establishment of a binary system of two kinds of higher education institution. This approach not only had no sound educational basis but also ignored the realities of the nature and purpose of the current university courses. In an early comment on the Martin Report, Partridge (1965) condemned the failure of the Martin Committee "to argue the

fundamental education theory, the central principles it purports to be following in the proposals it makes concerning the future role of universities and the nature and functions of the new colleges". A good deal has since been written to clarify or defend the supposed distinctions between universities and colleges of advanced education but the fundamental problem remains that both types of institutions offer high-level vocationally-oriented courses with the allocation of fields of study to each being largely determined by the prestige of the fields and traditional practices. Lindsay (1981) argues that the false distinction between the institutional types in terms of their vocational orientation derives from the long British and Australian tradition of assigning liberal education a high status and vocational education a low status which led to the erroneous pairing of the former with the high status universities and the latter with the lower status colleges. Whatever its derivation, the absence of a clearly differentiated set of purposes for the colleges of advanced education contributed significantly to the coordination problems of the 1970's.

It is too early yet to assess the significance for educational policy-making of the most recent major committee of enquiry chaired by Williams, but the Commonwealth government's initial response does not encourage the belief that the specific recommendations made by the committee will be pursued vigorously by the government. In addition, the Williams Committee suffered the double misfortune of being given terms of reference which excluded a close examination of the central problems of coordination and the division of powers while forcing it to concentrate on a series of labour market problems which cannot be solved by changes in educational policy. The terms of reference of the Williams Committee provide a good example of the limitations of a temporary committee of inquiry. While such committees can be made sensitive to pressures from outside the educational system, they lack the long-term perspective of permanent educational commissions and are highly susceptible to pressures favouring an over-emphasis on the encumbent government's immediate political objectives to the neglect of the long-term educational needs of society.

Commonwealth Government Commissions

At least partly as a consequence of the lack of direct legislative powers with respect to education the Commonwealth has often operated through a statutory authority created to determine needs for a particular area of education and to make recommendations about the allocation of funds. The pattern for federal commissions was established following the Murray Report when the Commonwealth government restructured the Australian Universities Commission as a semi-autonomous body and assigned to it the objective of promoting "the balanced development of universities so that their resources may be used to the greatest possible advantage of Australia" (Universities Commission, 1975: 8). Smart (1977: 27) has pictured the general pattern of Commonwealth entry as follows:

> Following sustained pressures and demands on the federal government for more systematic financial assistance and an inquiry into the needs of the sector in question, the government would appoint a committee, chaired by an eminent educationalist, to prepare a report recommending a course of action to the

government. Such recommendations usually resulted in the establishment of a permanent Commonwealth education commission for that sector, to advise the federal government on national policy guidelines and appropriate levels of triennial financial assistance.

This procedure was adopted following the Murray Report, the Martin Report, the Karmel Report, and the Kangan Report.

As the Universities Commission operated for the longest time and was the trendsetter, it is useful to examine its role in some detail. The immediate impact in government policy of the new commission's operations was the improved financial situation of the universities. The level of resources per student continued to improve until 1968, after which the level started to decline (Williams, 1976: 7-14). In addition to the expansion of the university system and the improvements in quality, there were some changes in emphasis such as a reduction in courses below degree standard and increases in postgraduate study and research.

One of the important longer-term impacts of the Commission was on the direction of university development, although during its existence the Australian Universities Commission did not achieve a better definition of its objectives, or the formulation of any overall policy on university development. Indeed, it appears that the Commission made little attempt to do so. Williams, (1977: 130) drew attention to this surprising situation: "In none of its reports does the AUC give an explicit account of what it means by balanced development." Williams goes on to examine the differences in participation rates among the States and the Commission's rather naive, and unfulfilled, belief that differences would be reduced in the absence of any policies designed to achieve that result. Lindsay and O'Byrne (1979) also examined this issue and concluded that even if the criteria for judging balance were to be determined, the distribution of powers would make it extremely difficult to implement any overall policy. They suggested that the Commission may have recognised that, taking into account university autonomy and the different State policies and priorities, and later, the lack of coordination among the tertiary sectors, it was impossible to pursue effectively balanced and coordinated development. The Commission had gone some way to expressing this view in its Fifth Report: "the differences in approach by the states could make difficult the statutory duty of the Commission to promote the balanced growth of the Australian universities" (Australian Universities Commission, 1972: 21).

Nevertheless, the concept of "balanced development" was subsequently included in the objectives of the Commission on Advanced Education, and finally as "balanced and coordinated development" in those of the Tertiary Education Commission. While these bodies occasionally discussed "balanced development" either across the States, across the tertiary education sectors, or across the levels and fields of study, there has been no explicit discussion of what mix on any of these dimensions would constitute a desirable "balance" and of what policies the Commission is pursuing to achieve the desired result. For example, one dimension of balance, the question of differences in participation across the States, is discussed in Volume 1 in the 1981 Report.

The TEC concluded that, as a consequence of the differing State needs and characteristics, there is no reason to argue that participation rates should be the same for all States. However, the Commission does not present evidence that any of the States are currently in balance in relation to an analysis of the specific needs and characteristics. If this were the case, the differences in the State participation rates reported by the Commission for 1979 (for example, the NSW rates are 4.9 per cent for universities and 3.4 per cent for colleges of advanced education, while the rates for Western Australia are 3.8 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively), could be explained in relation to the labour market, demographic, schooling, or other social patterns of each State (Tertiary Education Commission, 1981: 40). In the absence of any notion and evidence of balance in relation to individual State requirements or to across-State relativities, it appears that the differences are more indicative of the Commission's inability to promote balanced and coordinated development than of differences in State needs.

The Tertiary Education Commission was also charged in 1979 with promoting diversity and similar arguments may be put in relation to this objective. It is remarkable that in 1979 the Commission reiterated the government view put to Parliament by Senator Carrick in 1977 that it is important that the "essentially distinct and authentic characteristics of the three various types of tertiary institutions should be preserved and developed" (Tertiary Education Commission, 1979: 15), while over the period, government and Commission policies had been largely directed towards rationalization in ways which produce a more standardized and homogeneous system. Arguments for special needs and special cases have not been noticeably effective in prevailing against the drive for simplicity and uniformity. Substantial differences still exist in the way the Commission relates to each of the institutional types, but an emerging trend towards standardization and uniformity is apparent. Indeed, despite the heterogeneity evident in the wide range of institutional sizes, responsibilities and statutory provisions, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission will almost inevitably be forced, in the absence of operational objectives and policies for each sector, to operate through bureaucratic coordination; that is through the determination and application of consistent rules across entire sectors and, in some cases, across the entire tertiary system (Taylor, 1979).

Some time ago Hughes (1973: 73) argued that centralization inevitably means uniformity as opposed to diversity and the adoption of standard approaches instead of the freedom to experiment. More recently Neal (1979: 17) warned of the increasing degree of centralization: "there is ample evidence to support the view that centralism is increasing despite all the protestations that it is not, and despite some active efforts being made by the Tertiary Education Commission in particular to devolve authority on certain matters". Examples of the spread of uniformity following centralization can be seen at the State level as well as the Commonwealth. Parry (1980) examines the increasing similarities in the relationships between the two types of higher education institutions and the State coordinating bodies resulting from the decline in control over CAE's and the increasing control over universities.

Initially, each of the separate tertiary commissions developed quite different relationships with their institutions. Despite the provision for separate statutory councils for each sector, the creation of the Tertiary Education Commission has inevitably led to greater centralization and standardization; a trend which has been reinforced by the pressures for tighter coordination and control. An examination of the evolution of the commission-institution relationship reveals considerable change, especially in the university sector where a separate commission operated for the longest period with the most autonomous institutions. In its first report the Australian Universities Commission stated that it "works within a framework of university governments, State Governments and the Commonwealth Government, and its constant concern is to preserve the autonomy of the university and to avoid any infringement of State rights" (Australian Universities Commission, 1960: 8). Differing views have been expressed about the extent to which university autonomy has been reduced in practice. Williams (1977) provides a detailed analysis of the changing relationship between the Commission and the universities, concluding that, on balance, the Commission's operation had not reduced university autonomy. The Williams Report argues that this is a consequence of the Commission's respect for traditional university autonomy, the acceptance by Australian universities of the need for national plans, and the close working relationship between the universities and the Commission (Williams, 1979: 154). Contrary views, however, were expressed with Philp's claim that the Commonwealth was "calling the tune, and the universities are dancing to it!" (Philp, 1970: 17), and by Hughes (1973: 73):

> Autonomy of institutions, certainly at tertiary level, is highly desirable, in fact essential and should be maintained and even strengthened. Every action and intrusion of the Commonwealth government in these fields has militated against this principle and is gradually reducing the universities to puppets. This should be resisted to the full.

Derham (1975) also supports this interpretation of the effects of the Commonwealth's accumulation of power. Thus, it appears that there have been considerable changes in the way universities are viewed. Increasingly, they have been seen as agencies of governments, to be coordinated, initially within a university system and more recently, within the tertiary education system.

The establishment of the Commission on Advanced Education involved the development of a new type of commission-institution relationship. The much larger number of institutions, the different administrative traditions, and the different purposes and needs, meant that this commission had to adopt an approach different from that of the Universities Commission. The Commission on Advanced Education faced the more difficult task: dealing with a large number of colleges of advanced education, about which the States also had strong views. From the time of the Martin Report, the Commonwealth's plans for advanced education have been frustrated because of the quite different institutional and State views about the desired direction for development. This Commission-institution relationship also changed over time as the Commission tried to deal with the rapid, and in its view sometimes undesirable changes in the character of the institutions. Major changes

occurred with the incorporation of teachers colleges into the sector and with the takeover of funding by the Commonwealth in 1974 when, as a result of the removal of financial responsibilities, some States revised their policies on advanced education.

Although the role of the Commonwealth commissions has changed continuously with the gradual centralization of power, the single most important change in the Commission's role took place in 1976 when the government changed fundamentally the nature of its own relationship with the Commission by converting its planning approach from an enrolment-driven process to a funds-driven process. Whereas government policy prior to 1975 was to fund according to the advice of the Commission regarding the needs of the tertiary sectors, with the needs being largely determined by predictions of student enrolments, the current procedure involves the specification of a level of funds consistent with the government's broad fiscal policy and a determination of student numbers by calculation of the level that can be financed by the level of funds provided. In retrospect the change can be seen to signify the end of a whole approach to planning tertiary education which was initiated after the Murray Report. The decision fundamentally changes the nature of the Commission by removing it from its position as a buffer between institutions and governments and establishing it firmly as an agent for implementing government policy. The extent of the Commission's current influence on government policy cannot be readily gauged, but an examination of the "razor gang" report and the Minister for Education's statements since that time show that the Commission's advice and reports, like the Williams Report, tend to be used by the government only when they provide support for government decisions already reached on other grounds. O'Byrne and Lindsay (1978: 10) went further by claiming that the Commission had attempted to provide an educational rationale for a government decision actually made on other grounds; they maintained that the TEC's case for a no-growth policy in higher education which was purported to be based on demographic trends, participation rates and labour market requirements, was not sound and that a "more likely determinant of the policy is political decision-making in regard to broad, economic considerations, which have then been rationalized and presented as if the constraints involved were inherent in the educational and related factors". As a consequence, the Commission itself has ceased to have a major role in educational policy formation.

Commonwealth Government's Role in Policy Making

Much of what has already been said about the roles of committees of inquiry and the statutory commissions indirectly addresses the nature of the Commonwealth's role in policy making. However, a number of significant factors have not yet been examined. These include the relationship of government decisions to the changing social and economic climates and to the political philosophies of the parties and the key political figures. In the first forty years of federation the Commonwealth government persistently declined to become involved in the field of education. The 1940's brought the Commonwealth's acceptance of certain limited commitments and in the years that followed the range of these commitments has gradually widened. While making a substantial contribution to universities, the Menzies' government resisted increasing the

Commonwealth's commitments in the field of education except in specific cases which were seen to be of political advantage (Birch, 1977: 21). Nevertheless, from the mid 1960's to the mid 1970's there was an unparalleled expansion of the Commonwealth government's involvement in Australian education at all levels. The major instrument for the Commonwealth's increased participation was the statutory commission charged with advising on needs and recommending levels of financial support. Over this period, the trend in relationship between the government and its commissions has been one of decreasing government reliance on the advice and recommendations tendered by the commission. The government rejection of the financial recommendations of the Third Report of the Australian Universities Commission was the first indicator of this trend. Nevertheless, despite the pressures from the Treasury and from those States unwilling to increase their commitment to higher education, the commissions largely based their recommendations on the "real needs" of the institutions rather than on the ability or willingness of governments to pay (Williams, 1976: 130). The rejection in 1975 of the reports from all four federal commissions marked the end of this practice and established the government's willingness to pay rather than any information on needs as the dominant factor in educational planning. Thus the Commission's practice of adjusting its recommendations to result in a level of financing acceptable to the government became the standard procedure. In a context of scarce resources and with society's "needs" being almost unlimited, it is remarkable that a needs-based planning approach lasted for so long. Only a situation of strong economic growth and strong public demand for education could sustain such an approach. Clearly, the federal government now makes its policy decisions about the level of support for the tertiary education system, the level for each sector, and even for the institutional sub-sets, in relation to its broad social, political and economic objectives, and its estimation of electoral impact. This trend of a double shift in power, firstly from the education institutions to the co-ordinating agencies and then to the government, has also been reported in the United States at the state level (Millard, 1976; Berdahl, 1980) and at the federal level (Conrad and Cosand, 1976; Bender, 1977; Mayville, 1980).

Much of the recent government concern about tertiary education has focused on the system inefficiencies which developed in the previous period of uncoordinated expansion. While a good deal of criticism has been directed towards the education system and its institutions, a more appropriate target for much of the criticism would be the Commonwealth and State governments themselves and that whipping boy of Australian governments, the Commonwealth-State relationships. The failure of the Commonwealth and the States to formulate any overall policies for the development of tertiary education as a whole has already been discussed. Clearly this failure has been a prime cause of the current piecemeal structure and its associated inefficiencies. Secondly, the Commonwealth's decisions on the administrative arrangements for tertiary education have been a major contributing factor. These decisions resulted from the government's rejection of the advice of its expert committee of inquiry. The key events were the government decisions following the report of the Martin Committee which resulted in the establishment of a system with two independent sectors which were not susceptible to comprehensive

coordination. The rejection of the Martin Committee's recommendation for a tertiary education commission and the subsequent establishment of the Commission on Advanced Education was the genesis of the coordination problem. This decision, together with the government's failure to establish an adequate and agreed upon specification of the role of the Advanced Education sector created the conditions under which "clash of Commonwealth, State, and institutional views and interests produced the largely separate and uncoordinated development of the tertiary education sectors" (Lindsay, 1981). Recognition of the "piecemeal" tradition in Australian educational planning is not new, for example Connell (1970: 256): "there has never been any attempt to plan the whole range of schooling as a single unit nor to devise machinery to insure its various parts are interrelated to the best effect". Or to quote a State Minister for Public Works in the late 1960s:

> the present situation is intolerable because the approach to planning of higher education is fragmentary, spasmodic and uncoordinated, the whole educational program resulting from ad hoc situations which conform to no known pattern of development. In other words, there is no overall fundamental educational philosophy which has been carefully defined, carefully evaluated as the guiding principle of policy decisions jointly required at state and Commonwealth level. (Hughes, 1973: 62).

This lack of overall policy and planning which has continued to the present has been at the heart of the malaise in Australia's tertiary education system. The Commonwealth commissions have been remiss in allowing the education system to be saddled with the blame for this deficiency, rather than establishing that the real origin of the problem lies with the policies of governments and their approach to education; and even more fundamentally, with the underlying structure of relations between the Commonwealth and the States.

The belated creation of the Tertiary Education Commission in 1977 has not yet noticeably improved the situation. The economic constraints of declining government expenditure on education, the legacies of the past separate development, and the underlying difficulties for coordination associated with the nature of the relationship between the Commonwealth and the States, have severely restricted the influence the Tertiary Education Commission has been able to have on the overall pattern of tertiary education. Further, the government's downgrading of the policy role of the commission, and its continued adherence to the *ad hoc* and piecemeal tradition in educational planning means that the recent rationalization, supposedly made in the interests of system balance and efficiency has, in fact, a very doubtful basis. Certainly, the government has been unable to place individual decisions in a general context and demonstrate that they are consistent with an overall plan for the future of tertiary education in Australia.

Conclusion

Since the Second World War the evolution of the arrangements for national-level policy-making for Australian higher education has been influenced by three major forces: the distribution of powers across the national, state and institutional levels; the gradual acquisition of power by the Commonwealth;

and government preference for piecemeal and *ad hoc* planning. Recently the gradual upward movement of power to the Commonwealth level has been joined by a horizontal shift at that level from the Commission to government ministers and their departments. The major effects of these changes have been: the erosion of university autonomy; the trend towards standardization within the tertiary system; and the change in the basis of planning so that the level of expenditure on higher education is no longer determined in relation to the Commission's estimation of institutional needs reached in consultation with States and the institutions, but by Commonwealth government decision on the overall level of funding it is willing to provide. Thus, the universities have seen the substantial powers delegated to them by State governments in the university acts of incorporation effectively transferred firstly to the Commonwealth commission and then to the Commonwealth government itself. The educational institutions are now regarded by the Commonwealth as no more than agencies of government, not important in themselves, but only insofar as they contribute to economic and social development, or some other aim of government. Philp's (1970) predictions have now been completely realised.

The assumption of power by the Commonwealth government may yet increase the efficiency of the provision of higher education in Australia, but the signs are not encouraging. Neither the States nor the institutions have accepted that the Commonwealth's actions are legitimate or in the best interests of the higher education system and society. An effective strategy for improving higher education requires three difficult reforms. Firstly, the distribution of powers across the national, state and institutional levels, must be made more consistent. Secondly, a planning and administration mechanism must be developed to be consistent with the distribution of powers and with the effective and efficient pursuit of objectives. Finally, the Commonwealth and the States must reach a better agreement on their educational priorities and objectives. This last reform is crucial if the piecemeal tradition is to be broken. It appears that recognition of this by politicians may be developing:

> It is arguable, of course, that we can muddle along as before, but I do not myself think so, and I believe we must be concerned with articulating a coherent, national role for education, consistent with overall national priorities and with the society with which we are concerned to develop, which will be best able to cope with the challenges confronting this nation over the next two decades. (Button, 1981: 89).

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THE MARGINAL INFLUENCE OF RECENT REPORTS, INQUIRIES AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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Perhaps there have never been halcyon days in which the views of the professional through associations or reports were taken in full. In truth even those reports and inquiries which loom largest in our consciousness when we consider influence and decision-making are often found, on close examination, to fall far short of complete implementation of their recommendations (Corbett, 1969). However, it is the thesis of this paper that the influence of professional educators, through their associations and in the participation in reports and inquiries, has, over the last 7-10 years been in marked decline in Australia.

This paper seeks to show that the degree of influence which professionals have on educational policy and decision-making depends upon an interaction between themselves, their ideas and in particular, the temper of the time: the *zeitgeit*. If, as Cohen and Garet suggest, educational policy and reports on education are assumed to be connected by interactions between traditions of inquiry on the one hand and climates of knowledge and belief on the other (Cohen and Garet, 1975), then it would appear sensible to generate reports on education which are compatible with and attuned to the prevailing social climates.

There have been times when this interaction has been particularly favourable. As a first example of this, we instance the work and influence of John Dewey, the Progressive Movement and the development of education in the United States which was a propitious interaction between a man, his ideas, his writing and personality, and the times in which he lived. Dewey was an accomplished philosopher, a skilful and passionate advocate of educational ideas and a man with an engaging personality. Yet these attributes could have come to nothing had not the climate of opinion existing at the turn of the century in the United States been one which was right for educational and social reform — change was in the air.

Cremin, the distinguished educational historian and Dean of Education, Columbia University, has said of that time that regeneration was the eternal theme of the 1890's (Cremin, 1961). America was ready for reforms: the need for them and the pressure to bring them about had been building for some time. The significance of Dewey and of those educational reformers and a major cause of their influence was that they occurred at the time they did. Between 1895 and 1905 Dewey, through his writings and his actions synthesised and polarised reforms and changes that had been latent for some time. By his actions Dewey found himself a leader not only of the movement for educational reform, but also a leader of the wider social and political program that was known as the Progressive Movement. That this was the case, is in itself a reflection of a significant quality in Dewey in that he understood and believed that educational change could not, and should not,

take place in a vacuum but was necessarily part of a wider social and political reform. For Dewey politics and education were inextricably entwined and interacted with each other.

This linking of politics and education and the interaction between them was crucial in Dewey's time and is crucial now if professional educators are to influence educational policy. However, the situation now is that too many professionals in education are out of step with the politics of the times. Throughout the early 20th century Dewey's ideas and influence continued to grow and that they continued to do so was because the political conditions were favourable to the ideas that were being propounded by the Progressive Movement. Changes were taking place in schools. By 1918 all States in America had some form of compulsory education. Continuing waves of immigrants and the social upheaval of the First World War ensured that education should increasingly become education for life, for living, for work and for play (Archambault, 1966). The significance of Dewey and the reformers lay in their ability to synthesise and polarise reform movements that were latent in American society. Dewey's pre-eminence lay also in his recognition of education and the school as a lever for social change and his understanding that education was an adjunct to politics and was inevitably entwined with politics in bringing about a particular way of life.

A second example of a period in which educational change and development has been led and fed by professionals was the late 1950's and 1960's in England. A period of awakening from the traumas and difficulties of the post-war era, the coming to fruition of Prime Minister Macmillan's 'You've never had it so good' era; it was characterised by change in education, stimulated and directed by a number of influential reports.

These reports were from the Central Advisory Council (England): the Crowther Report on Secondary and Further Education (Crowther, 1959), the Newson Report on Secondary Education for Non-Academic Pupils (Newson, 1963) and the Plowden Report on Primary Education (Plowden, 1967). Influential, too, were two other reports — the Robbins Report on Higher Education (Robbins, 1963) and the Albermarle Report on the Youth Service in England and Wales (Albermarle, 1960). All of these reports received very considerable attention from the Government and many of their recommendations were implemented. One compelling reason for this favourable reception is that there was a climate for change, expansion and growth in the United Kingdom at the time and the Chairpersons and the memberships of the Committees which produced the reports were very effective at linking the reports and recommendations of their committees with the views and ideals of the people in political power.

The Albermarle Committee, for example, made a modest set of recommendations to improve on the situation in which the Youth Service in England and Wales got but one penny in every pound spent on education by the Ministry and the local education authorities combined. When the report was released, the Government immediately accepted in principle all of the recommendations addressed to it. The Government agreed to the expansion of training facilities,

the new salary structure for youth leaders, big building programmes and the establishment of a Development Council, and the Government stood by its promises.

Perhaps of more interest to those concerned with tertiary education would be the Robbins Report. Again it is worth noting that the Government of the time issued, immediately after the report, a statement accepting a number of the main recommendations. The most important of these were the target figures for the whole of higher education and for universities in 1967-68 and 1973-74 and an agreement to meet the estimated costs. Even after a change of Government in October 1964 with a Labor Government coming to power, acceptance of many of the recommendations of the report, including the acceptance of the Robbins target of 122,000 places in Colleges of Education by 1973-74 and reaffirmation of the commitment to the total and the university figures, all remained. Significant, too, amongst the recommendations was that the Colleges of Advanced Technology should get university status. This did come about. All in all, it is an impressive record of acceptance and action.

Yet before the end of the 1960's, several educators and commentators in England had forecast the end of the golden age of expansion, change and progressive development. Writing in 1970, Vaizey forecast that money for reform and development might become tight and the ordinary taxpayer become disillusioned with the failure of education to deliver on so many of its promises and claims (MacArthur, 1970).

What of Australia? In some respects there has been a similar trend over the same period, though the golden age lasted into the mid 1970's. For example, the Murray Report: Report of the Committee on Australian Universities (Murray, 1957) was very influential. It has been suggested by others (Neilson and Shelldrake, 1977) that that report was crucial in that it was the first substantial justification for extensive Commonwealth investment in the post-secondary sector. It laid out a programme for the development of the universities and the establishment of the Universities' Grants Body (the AUC) which had considerable significance for the development of the post-secondary sector. The Murray Report occurred at a time in Australian life when change, expansion and development were in the air, influenced perhaps by Australia's growing involvement and closeness with the rest of the world. The Martin Report on Tertiary Education in Australia (Martin, 1965) was of equal significance to the Murray Report. The Martin Report and its follow-up report, the Wark Report of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education (Wark, 1966) acted as a stimulus to change and expansion in Australian tertiary education particularly in the development of Colleges of Advanced Education. Any reading of these reports shows that they are replete with phrases involving the words *develop, strengthen, improve, increase* and use as justification for their expansionist recommendations the need to serve what at that time was perceived as an ever expanding growth in the Australian economy and society.

The Murray and Martin committees together established the basic structure of tertiary education in its present form. To appreciate their impact, it is

important to realise in the case of these two committees the compatability between the socio-economic-political climate of the time with the specific recommendations for change. Rapid post-war developments in both the university and college sectors were in direct response to buoyant economic growth in that period. The need for skilled and professional services with expansion in industry, commerce and mineral exploration, together with associated levels of general prosperity in the community set the stage for acceptance of the expansionist principles advocated by the two committees for the entire tertiary sector (Wilson and Woock, 1981).

Where now is the dream of continual growth and expansion? What has happened to growth in education, to the influence of educators which seems so marked a part of life in Australia but a decade ago? The fate of two recent reports will illustrate the answers:

(1) *The Report on Education, Training and Employment: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education and Training* (Williams, 1979).

(2) *The Report of the National Inquiry into Teacher Education* (Auchmuty, 1980).

Examination of these reports supports the view that professionals in education seem to have lost touch with the direction of change and reform and with political realities of Australian life.

While it is yet early days to reach any final conclusion regarding the fate of these reports, they do appear to be lost without a trace, and to have been quickly ignored and forgotten. They illustrate the thesis that their lack of influence arises from their fundamental orientation, the thrust of their main recommendations being so out of step with the temper of the times, as perceived by politicians and reflected by the media and indeed, society as a whole, as to be almost looking and marching in an opposite direction to that in which Australian society is going. In short, the two reports are classic examples of an expansionist tune played during a recession.

Each report has been impressive in its failure to influence in any major way the direction or substance of educational policy in this country. This failure is primarily due to their disregard for important social and political forces which are integral to the dynamics of educational change. Too often members of enquiries and authors of reports reflect little real understanding of the functional relationships between recommendations for policy in education, and the wider climate of receptivity (or otherwise) to change, particularly when recommendations propose expansionist principles in times of cut-back, contraction, restraint and 'rationalisation' in provision for education.

Insightful analyses of these and related problems are provided in the recent ACER publication, *Educational Research for Policy Making in Australia* (Shellard, 1979). Chapters by Keeves, Higgins, Sinclair and Sheppard in particular, clearly demonstrate the need for research processes and policy making processes to be understood in relation to wider social and political systems.

The *Williams Report* qualifies as one of those that has been quickly forgotten. One can dip into the report at any place and find recommendations which both at the time that they were made and now, close to three years later, make sorry reading. For example, in discussing basic skills and levels to be reached it makes a recommendation,

> that the Australian Education Council develop an appropriate and comprehensive programme of action and provide finance for the Australian Council for Educational Research to undertake an expert study so that it will become possible to . . . investigate levels of basic skills (etc.)

Their recommendations with regard to universities and their size, in which they recommend that universities could not be efficient and economical with less than 4,000 students in those providing courses in the Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences, or less than 8,000 when courses were provided in Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Agriculture and Engineering has been ignored. Particularly galling for those in the College sector of tertiary education is their recommendation dealing with terms of reference for inquiries into closures, amalgamations and the range of courses, in which they specify the considerations to be brought into account: 'They should include the effects of the proposals on the region and on the rest of the sector or other sectors and any problems of an industrial nature'. If ever there was a recommendation from a national inquiry which was comprehensively ignored by the Government in power shortly afterwards, this must surely be it!

Their later recommendation on this same topic where they draw attention to the fact that Teachers' Colleges can be both economical and small also makes sour reading in the light of subsequent Government action. Again, those of us involved in Colleges of Advanced Education who have to endure accreditation and reaccreditation processes with State Boards may look with wry amusement at the recommendation wherein the Williams Committee recommends:

> that the principle of external accreditation of advanced education courses be maintained but that State Boards amend their procedures so that well-developed colleges or departments within them which have effective procedures for testing vocational relevance of courses and academic competence attested by external authorities are not subject to the same detailed visitations and assessments as the less developed colleges. (R9.10)

It would be wrong to give the impression that all of the *Williams Report* recommendations have been ignored by Government. Some parts of the Committee's report and its recommendations do seem to have matched the feeling of the times. For example:

> that Departments of Education in Colleges of Advanced Education and Universities give greater emphasis to ways of teaching reading and number work; and to ways of identifying children who are handicapped or have perceptual problems that might cause learning difficulties and have need for special remedial teaching. (R4.11)

In the last two or three years as courses have come up for reaccreditation in various States, the new and revised courses in basic teacher education programmes have moved to place greater emphasis on literacy and competency

in number. Similarly, the Committee's recommendation for the establishment of centres of excellence in universities to be concerned with specific research has been taken up by the Government, albeit not funded at the level which the *Williams Report* suggested.

Judged on its impact however, the inescapable conclusion is that the *Williams Report* was a failure. Perhaps recommendation R12.19 can serve as a vignette. In that recommendation the Committee said that it 'supports the approach of the ERDC and the TEC in providing funds for promising research in course materials development.' The slashing attack of the Lynch Committee (the 'Razor Gang'), which led to the demise of ERDC as a source of funds for educational research and the removal of funding and virtual abolition of the CDC, shows clearly that the Government, far from accepting the recommendations of the *Williams Report*, has moved in opposite directions.

In some senses the *Williams Report* is a classic example of an inquiry which so misses the pulse of social and political trends that the period between inception and report sees change which leaves it high and dry. Set up in October 1976 the Williams Committee came into being not long after the return to power of the Liberal Government following the trauma of November, 1975. A little over a year after its establishment the Liberal Government was returned again to power and began to embark upon a set of economic and social policies which were designed to halt the expansionist (and in their view inflationary) trend of the late 60's and early 70's. The present writers view the *Williams Report* as belonging to the genre of an earlier era. A report left beached when tide and the direction changed dramatically. Thus, by 1979 when the Committee reported, the Liberal Government was firmly entrenched and directing its attentions toward limiting the federal bureaucracy and pulling back from expansionist social engineering programmes of which education and tertiary education have been a part. In the years since 1979 this trend has continued, and to read the *Williams Report* now is to read an interesting but irrelevant document which can be regarded as having historical significance only, marking the end of an era.

The National Inquiry into Teacher Education — the Auchmuty Inquiry — was established in July, 1978. One might have thought that at that time the political, economic and social trends in Australia as embodied by the Government in power, the National-Liberal coalition, would have been sufficiently clear that any inquiry might reasonably have some chance of reflecting those trends or making recommendations that had some possibility of acceptance. Such was not to be the case however, for, when in August 1980 the Auchmuty Inquiry reported, it too, was quickly assigned to a shelf to gather dust. Indeed, there was virtually not a single word of support from the Government for the recommendations of the report.

As with the *Williams Report*, a review of the *Auchmuty Report* and its recommendations from the position of almost a year and a half later makes sorry reading. One hardly knows whether to cry or laugh at the recommendations which so miss the time as to seem ludicrous. Where to begin? Chapter 4 perhaps, with its whole series of recommendations on

teacher development and inservice, urging more inservice, special attention to courses for non-Aboriginal teachers who teach Aboriginal children, its support for paid release time and so on. Or its recommendations on accreditation and reaccreditation where it urges that institutions rather than particular courses should be accredited. Its recommendation for centres of excellence which should be established in individual teacher education institutions which have developed a high reputation and involvement in special areas. Saddest of all perhaps is their recommendation dealing with research in teacher education in which the Committee recommends: 'the annual budget of the Education Research and Development Committee should be *increased* (emphasis added) by $200,000 to enable it to mount a co-ordinated programme of research and development in teacher education' (R9.1). Oh woe!

It does not do to pretend that all of the recommendations in the *Auchmuty Report* totally miss the point and direction of educational policy. As with the *Williams Report*, Auchmuty's emphasis in various places on the need for greater attention to literacy and numeracy skills in the training of teachers is being incorporated into courses. But overall like the *Williams Report*, the *Auchmuty Report* has not been an influential document insofar as Government policy toward education has been concerned.

It is not appropriate to leave this list of ignored reports and inquiries without mention of two others. First, the *Sax Report* — Nurse Education and Training. Established in September, 1977, the Sax Committee moved quickly and reported in August 1978. Generally a bland document, it did, nevertheless, make recommendations in favour of increasing the number of students in basic nursing programmes within tertiary education and recommended a more rapid expansion into post-basic nursing programmes in tertiary institutions. Once again, an example of a report which appeared to miss the Government boat. For a year and a half, the Government sat on the fence, neither committing itself to dismissal of the report and its recommendations nor to acceptance of them. But in the winter of 1980 the Government moved, in line with what was a developing and increasingly clear trend in its policy towards higher education and training, concluding that it could not support the recommendations for increased numbers of nursing students in tertiary institutions.

The last report touched upon here is in some respects the most depressing. The reference is, of course, to the report of the Tertiary Education Commission for the 1982-84 Triennium, published in February, 1981. It is a sad document because it is clear that the Chairman of the Commission, Professor Karmel, and the members, its Universities Council, its Advanced Education Council and the Technical and Further Education Council were not unaware of the direction of the Government's thinking and had attempted to trim their sails accordingly and to produce a report which would serve the best interests of education and at the same time be acceptable to the Government. *The Report for the 1982-84 Triennium* is depressing because, but days after its publication, the recommendations of the Lynch Committee were brought in and immediately accepted by the Government, with dramatic consequences for Colleges of Advanced Education, educational research, research and

development, etc . . . The apparent dismissal by the Government of the *Report for the 1982-84 Triennium* so short a time after its publication constituted a public slap for education and its senior advisors.

How has it happened that in recent years these national reports and inquiries have had so little influence upon Government education policy? In part it is because the reports, the members of the profession who make up committees of inquiries etc., fail to detect, understand, or perhaps *believe* the signifiers of changes in Government policy and cultural change which are happening at the time. Thus members of inquiries are just not sensitive to the direction in which Government policy and social change is moving.

Commissions and Committees, Inquiries and Reports look backward, face the rear, gaze at the past. The bulk of the submissions which come to these committees and inquiries come from professional educators, the mass of whom themselves would seem to be living in the past. Large numbers of professional educators in senior positions came and had their most significant experiences with regard to the profession, its principles, values and direction at a time of expansion, growth and progressive development. Thus when they make submissions to national or state inquiries concerned with education, they make them in these terms; failing to recognise that the ideas, the ideals, the principles and the assumptions with which they grew professionally and which served so well in the 50's, 60's and early 70's are no longer accepted by the Government and are increasingly questioned and rejected by the society at large.

A further reason for the lack of influence on educational policy on the part of these recent reports and inquiries is that they reflect an expansionist set of recommendations and it is clear that Government is no longer in the mood for expansion so far as education is concerned. Further is the fact that it is the very nature of reports, inquiries, committees that they should be self-serving, in the sense that they should be expansionist. It is perhaps asking too much for members of a profession to recommend cut-backs in their own power and influence. It is the very nature of reports that they tend to recommend 'more' and only very occasionally will they recommend 'less'. To pursue this point further, we believe that the bulk of leadership and management in education is geared and oriented toward implementing expansionist recommendations and that there is very little experience in working or managing a contracting, shrinking situation. There is little experience and taste for this for, as suggested, the bulk of professional educators are themselves, unreconstructed expansionists from the 50's, 60's and 70's.

Professional associations in education fall into much the same categories of error as do inquiries and the reports of inquiries. The Australian College of Education, the South Pacific Association for Teacher Education, the Australian Association for Research in Education; all of these have been notably unsuccessful in shifting the direction and pace of government policy with regard to education. Similarly the larger associations and teacher unions have been unsuccessful in persuading the Government of the wisdom of their positions and views.

In one of his better known songs, Bob Dylan has the lines, 'you don't need a weather man to tell which way the wind blows'. It seems that professional educators fall into that category of persons who do indeed need a weather man to tell which way the wind blows. In the last two or three years, the wind has become a gale. Yet in discussions with so many professional educators, it is still not common to find recognition of the direction of educational policy and some understanding that the best chance for influencing policy lies in working within the general trend rather than attempting a radical change of direction.

In Australia in the early 1980's, to read the reports of recent inquiries concerned with education and the submissions of professional educators made to them is a sad experience. In some respects, recent reports and their perceptions of educational policy call to mind a German phrase *'Die Wissenschaft des nicht Wissenwarten'* which translates as *'The science of what is not worth knowing'*. The recommendations of so many of the reports and the proposals and suggestions of so many professionals in their submissions are not worth knowing because they belong to another time, another era. To the present Government, it must indeed sound like a foreign language and, since it is a language not spoken by the Government, it can, and is, conveniently ignored.

If there is any ray of sunshine, it probably lies at the state level, where some of the recent State inquiries (Gilding, 1980; Keeves, 1982; Vickery, 1980) appear to be couched in terms which are likely to have more influence upon policy in particular States. The reason for this greater influence, is, we suggest, that within a State, particularly small States, such as South Australia and Western Australia, the closeness of the community and the greater possibility of day-to-day interaction between politician and educator has resulted in reports which reflect the views of the tribunes of the people, and therefore show some better chance of implementation of their recommendations.

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN BRITISH EDUCATION POLICY

GARETH WILLIAMS

> Governments are not omniscient. One of the most important facts about governments is that for all the information and advice at their disposal they often cannot think up ways of doing what they want to do. (John Passmore: Boyer Lectures "The Limits of Government". ABC Radio 1981).

Introduction

Mrs Thatcher's conservative government came to power in May 1979. Her government is often described as the most radical in Britain since 1945. Certainly Mrs Thatcher and her senior ministers claim to be undertaking a radical transformation of Britain from which we shall all emerge leaner, healthier and generally rejuvenated. I want to examine some of the education policies of this radical government. I am concerned not with the merits of the policies themselves but with their origins and with their implementation.

A common view is that the government has no education policy. According to this view the government's only policy aim is overcoming inflation: it believes only one mechanism can achieve this — a tight money supply; and that it has only two instruments for controlling this mechanism — high interest rates and low public expenditure. The only place education policy has in this scheme of things is that since education does not directly create wealth or contribute to law and order it must bear at least its proportionate share of expenditure cuts. This is an interesting contrast to the widespread political belief of the 1960s that money spent on education was a productive economic investment and helped to increase law and order through the reduction of inequality and the creation of an educated citizenry.

It is not necessarily disreputable for a British Government to have no explicit education policy. The responsibility for many of the interesting decisions rests elsewhere: decisions about curricula; about the admission of students; about the recruitment of staff. In addition there is a huge number of pressure groups all trying to nudge parts of the education system in one direction or another. An extreme libertarian interpretation of the government's role is to hold the ring and to let the actual evolution of policy depend on the interplay of local authorities, school governors, head teachers, teachers unions, employers pressure groups, parental pressure groups, "do-good" pressure groups and so on.

At the other extreme is the view that education policy depends on the personal whim of the Secretary of State. This is the impression given by the education press, though it is not entirely clear whether journalists themselves believe it, or whether they just believe that personalities sell papers — even to academics. An illustration of interpretation of policy making is given in the leading article in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* of 1 January 1982: "The present government's financial attack on higher education has been slightly reduced so that the ideological attack can be pressed home more strongly. Under Sir Keith (Joseph) ideology has come back."

There is, of course, some ambiguity about what policy actually is. This is not the place for an extended discussion of the issue. I agree with the definition offered by Grant Harman at the 1979 ACE conference. According to Harman "Policy can be viewed basically as a course of action, or inaction, towards the accomplishment of some intended or desired end. It embraces both what is actually intended and what occurs as a result of the intention." The important point of this definition is that it draws attention to policy as intention, policy as process and policy as outcome. The outcome of education policies is often very different from the aims — "governments are not omniscient".

We can distinguish three categories of education policy. First, there is policy concerned with the substance of what goes on in schools and colleges. A large part of this is curriculum policy. Second there is education policy concerned with the structure and governance of the system of schools, colleges and other institutions that supply educational services. The third branch of policy is concerned with allocating money and other resources to the schools and colleges. Policies on finance and policies on structure should not be ends in themselves. They are a means of influencing what actually take place in schools and colleges. However, in discussions of education policy in Britain we tend to treat policies on the finance of education and policies on the structure of the educational system as if they were ends in themselves.

Policy Agenda

In thinking about the question "Who makes education policy?" I find it helpful to visualise a policy agenda. I have in mind a picture of a group of people ordering a meal in one of those restaurants with a menu that takes about half an hour to read. The choice of possible combinations of courses is endless. The diner tries to put together a meal of three or four dishes that satisfies a variety of aims and constraints. He is influenced by his tastes; by what he can afford; by what he had for his previous meal; by the attitude of his companions — after all he does not want to breathe garlic fumes all over a promising new girl friend.

So it is, I think, with policy. The infinite round of meetings, books, articles, demonstrations that constitutes the education policy debate is in effect a very long, and confusing menu from which a government chooses a few items it thinks it can digest during its period of office. Some governments are greedy and bite off more than they can chew; others are fitness freaks and confine themselves to a strict diet.

What determines the items a government puts on its education policy agenda? There are I think four:

1. Population pressures
2. Economic and social policy in areas other than education
3. Changes in the general political climate of opinion
4. The government's own ideological preferences.

Population Pressures

By far the biggest single influence on British education policy during the past ten years has been the decline in the birthrate which started in 1965. It will continue to be the dominant influence on British education at least until the 1990s. There were about 35 per cent fewer babies born in 1978 than there were in 1964.

It is possible to interpret vast areas of British education policy since 1945 simply in terms of responses to population changes. Many of the items which have recently come to the top of the policy agenda can be attributed directly to the switch in the mid 1970s from a rising to a falling school population. Much of the apparent financial stringency in primary and secondary schools is largely a result of the fall in pupil numbers. Up to 1981 at least the decline in education budgets was less than the fall in the number of pupils. In 1981 the overall pupil/teacher ratio in primary and secondary schools was more favourable than it had ever been. The changing size of school populations has many other effects. One of the main policy preoccupations of recent years has been the education and training of 16-19 year olds. I am certain that this is largely because the number of people in this age group has been rising while the number of pupils of compulsory school age has fallen. It is not easy to transfer resources from one branch of education to another.

There is a growing campaign for concentrating the whole of the sixth form (or 16-18 year old) component of general education in special sixth form or what we call tertiary colleges. Much of this debate is sincere discussion of the educational issues involved. In the background there is some jockeying for position by vested interests — for example different branches of upper secondary education are dominated by different teachers' unions. But the issue is rising to the top of the policy agenda because with rapidly falling numbers of people in the relevant age groups, sixth forms in many average size high schools are becoming very small, extremely expensive and unable to offer a suitably broad educational experience to their students.

Teacher training is directly affected by the number of pupils expected in the future. We had an enormous increase in the number of colleges in the 1960s and we had mass closure of colleges in the 1970s. But there are also more subtle influences of population on teacher training. When teachers were in short supply there were advantages in committing students to teaching as far ahead as possible. Courses were long and highly specialised. Now the overriding need is not for more teachers, but for a flexible response to a changing pattern of needs by region and by subject. There is a tendency for the teacher training component of courses to become shorter — a one year post-graduate course following a bachelor's degree not specifically geared to teaching.

I could multiply the examples almost indefinitely but I will content myself with one more that is at first sight even further removed from the numbers game. I refer to the debate about the core curriculum. Should we abandon the traditional autonomy of the English school in curriculum matters in favour of some central intervention? Clearly there are important educational and

philosophical issues involved. Malcolm Skilbeck has come to England to help us solve them. But why is this issue considered to be particularly important just at the moment? Largely, I submit, because with falling pupil numbers many teachers will not be replaced when they leave. Some criteria are essential to help the authorities decide which teachers are to be replaced. If the resignation of a teacher of English means that a significant number of pupils receive no instruction in the English language a retiring teacher would obviously have to be replaced even if the school was otherwise generously staffed. But what if the departing teacher left the school without the means of teaching a second foreign language? That school might have a strong tradition of teaching languages to a high standard. But how would its claim compare with a less academic neighbouring school which has just lost its only foreign language teacher? Is it essential for all secondary schools in England to teach at least one foreign language? I do not know. But if I were a practising educational administrator I should certainly be needing the answer to this and other, more difficult curriculum questions over the next few years.

Wider Economic and Social Policy

The second source of education policy is other economic and social policy. I have already presented the case, widely believed in Britain, that the present government's education policy is merely an adjunct of its monetarist doctrines. But the case is broader than this. I think the influence of economic and social policy on education has been second only to the demographic imperatives. National policy on comprehensive secondary education owed more to social policy objectives than to educational ideas. The expansion of higher education was justified in terms of economic and social policy aims. Keeping open small and expensive village schools which can offer only a very narrow range of educational opportunities is justified in terms of the contribution they make to community life in their areas. I suppose the most widely known education policy of Mrs Thatcher's government is its decision to charge full cost fees to students from overseas — making Britain by far the most expensive country in the world for foreign students. This policy is undoubtedly financial in origin and very little attention seems to have been given to its educational, social or political implications.

Political and Ideological Influences

The third and fourth sources of education policy can conveniently be considered together. There is some difficulty in distinguishing policies that spring from changes in political thinking generally from those that result from the government's ideological preferences. Elected governments do respond to some extent to the attitudes of the electorates that put them in power. Thus the massive expenditure cuts in higher education during the past twelve months can be attributed to the elitist ideological preferences of the government, or the cuts can be seen as the culmination of a decade in which the demand for higher education by school leavers consistently fell below the level for which resources were provided. Politicians and journalists finally noticed that the demand for higher education was stagnating. More attention was being paid to articles and speeches critical of higher education. Thus the political climate which led to the election of a radical conservative government in 1979 is also

responsible for the changed fortunes of higher education. The test between changing general attitudes towards education and the ideological preferences of the party in power as a source of policy is whether another possible government would be likely to move in the same direction. There is little doubt in my mind that a labour government — or a social democratic government — would have a broadly similar policy towards higher education as the actual conservative government — though its financial harshness might be mitigated a little because of a rather more favourable attitude towards public expenditure generally.

Educational Policy Making in Britain

Finally I want to consider briefly some of the education policies of Mrs Thatcher's government. My concern is to try to detect the source of these policies; to try to answer the conference question: "who makes education policy?" I am not concerned to pass judgement on the policies themselves.

One of the first actions of the government, in June 1979 was to pass an Act of Parliament making it no longer compulsory for local authorities to reorganise their secondary education along comprehensive lines. This was clearly inspired by ideological differences with the previous government. The actual outcome was somewhat weakened in the May 1981 local elections when labour captured the majority of local councils and many local education authorities immediately set about the task of completing the comprehensive reorganisation of their secondary schools. To complete the process they must obtain the approval of Sir Keith Joseph — who, the *T.H.E.S.* and many others believe, is inspired by elitist ideological motives. It will be interesting to see how Sir Keith reacts to the applications for the reorganisation of secondary education that will undoubtedly be coming his way during the next twelve months.

This highlights another aspect of educational policy making in Britain that must be understood in order to answer the question "who makes education policy in that country?" Legally the control of education is a partnership between central and local government. It has happened several times in the past twenty years that local elections have been held when national governments were at the lowest point of their popularity between elections. More often than not the majority of local authorities have been of the opposite political complexion from the party in power nationally. Education is by far the largest responsibility of local authorities so education policy more than any other has been influenced by the tensions between central and local government. The actual outcome of any policy which is at all politically controversial is the unpredictable resultant of these opposing forces rather than the working out of the policy intentions of a single source of political power.

The second Education Act of Parliament of the 1979 conservative government was a more complex measure. It is particularly interesting because it replaced a Bill which had already been presented to Parliament by the previous labour government. We can therefore compare the government's policy aims with those of its predecessor.

The Act has six main provisions. The first concerns the membership of school governing bodies. This enacts a few of the recommendations of an official committee of enquiry (the Taylor Committee) and it differs little from the labour government proposal. Most of the Taylor Committee's recommendations were, however, ignored by both Conservative and Labour Governments. This is a typical example of the Committee of Enquiry as a source of policy change. With the exception of Robbins on higher education in 1963 and Plowden on Primary schools in 1967 it would be hard to claim that such committees have been a major influence on education policy in Britain. Even in the case of Robbins and Plowden they were important more for encapsulating the spirit of their times rather than for their explicit effect on government policy. A recent example of a committee which may prove to have the same kind of pervasive influence is the report of the 1980 Warnock Committee on educational provision for physically and intellectually handicapped children. Many of its recommendations have been incorporated in a government white paper which has been treated largely as being politically non-controversial.

The second section of the 1980 Act was concerned with the power of local authorities to establish *Planned Admissions Limits* for schools. When school populations are falling it is important for local authorities to be able to regulate the rate of decline of neighbouring schools and to have criteria for deciding when to close a school or to merge neighbouring schools. This is the aim of this section of the Act. It is an example of a policy whose broad shape was imposed on the government by demographic imperatives. It differs somewhat from the labour party proposals in giving more scope to parental choice of school and may be considered an ideological gloss.

The theme of parental choice is more important in the provision which requires local authorities to give parents detailed information about the nature of the various schools in their localities. I understand that implementation is presenting some problems with local authorities claiming they have no money to carry out this task in more than a superficial way. The next provision also results from the government's own educational priorities. It will allow the government to allocate funds to private schools for the purpose of offering scholarships to a small number of specially deserving pupils from state schools. Implementation of this measure has run into some problems. It conflicts with the aim of reducing public expenditure and the amount of money available has been progressively reduced until it has reached an almost purely symbolic level. Secondly, the majority of local authorities with their labour majorities are refusing to co-operate in the operation of the scheme. Third, the unkindest cut of all, many independent schools are not anxious to become embroiled in this kind of political controversy. They have been doing well in recent years by maintaining a low political profile and many of them are saying that perhaps they will wait a year or two before deciding whether to take part in the scheme.

The final main provision of the 1980 Act relieves local authorities of the obligation to provide midday meals in their schools. The provision of school dinners dates back to the early years of the century and was made compulsory

in 1944. It is an example of a policy that was originally concerned more with social than with educational aims. The withdrawal of the legal obligation enabled the government to withdraw the specific grant made to local authorities for this purpose and thus to reduce their expenditure in accordance with their economic policy aims.

Most commentators in British education policy describe the 1960s as a period of consensus in which there was broad agreement about policy aims, and the 1970s as a period of growing dissensus or conflict as a result of the disintegration of the consensus. I find this interpretation inadequate. I think there was roughly the same amount of conflict and the same amount of consensus in the two periods. The difference was that in the earlier period resources were increasing so progress could be made simultaneously towards many of the objectives. As resources became scarcer — which in my view was not due mainly to changes in public attitudes specifically towards education — governments have rejected more and more possible policy objectives. Conflicts which were latent came out into the open and were quite explicit by the late 1970s.

To return to my restaurant analogy. If everyone at the table is able to have what he wants it does not matter much that people have different tastes: that some of them are vegetarians and others meat eaters. But imagine a group anxious to save money by ordering the same meal for everybody.

Finally, back to John Pasmore. "Governments . . . often cannot think of ways of doing what they want to do". One way of achieving their aims is to offer financial incentives. A government whose declared aim is the reduction of public expenditure deprives itself of one of the most effective ways of achieving almost any other policy objective. And that is the dilemma in which I feel the British government at present finds itself with regard to its education policies.

THE FAMILY AND POLICY MAKING

LADY ANNA COWEN

I rather wonder about my credentials to be your speaker on the subject of the role of the parent in the formulation of education policy. In one impressive respect I am well qualified. My four children arrived over nearly a fifteen year span, and between the year of the first entering nursery school and the last emerging hopefully with his Higher School Certificate in his hand, just on thirty years will have elapsed. There were one or two years in which I could boast one child in pre-school, one in primary, another in secondary and yet another in tertiary education! Our experience covered four Australian and two American cities, government and independent schools, traditional and experimental programs. One strong feeling which remains with me after this varied experience, is that what most influences educational outcomes is less the philosophy of the school or the character of its administration than the quality and commitment of the individual teacher. That is not to say that policy and administration are not important; clearly they are, and they may very much affect the performance of the teacher in the classroom. It is to say that in the last resort it is the individual teacher who, I believe, is decisive. The enthusiastic teacher who really likes teaching and likes and cares about children, is invaluable.

As a lay person I have, however, long been interested in education since I learned in 1952 about Preshil progressive primary school in Melbourne, to which we later sent some of our children. I very much liked the approach to the whole child, and the friendly and easy relationships between parents and teachers. The discussion evenings I attended with other parents and teachers at that school gave me an interest in approaches to education, and in later years and other cities I was active in helping to re-establish lapsed sections of World Education Fellowship which would provide a forum for discussion and ideas. The last four years however have seen me in Canberra leading a rather different life, and somewhat out of the mainstream of school-parent activities. Out of this rarified atmosphere you have plucked me to comment on a very real and live issue affecting our schools.

Until recent innovations in some government systems parents had no say in education policy. When disagreement with educational procedures arose, parents could speak to teachers or principals, write letters to the newspapers, contact their Members of Parliament, or write letters to State education department officers. (I was once told this could be quite effective if a sufficient number of letters were written on an issue.) Parents who could afford to do so could additionally vote with their feet, and place their children in independent schools. There might be an element of choice for children in government schools if they were allowed to attend any school, free of zoning, and the uniform curriculum prescribed centrally found varying expression in different schools due to differences in principals and teaching personnel.

Independent schools tend to be governed by Councils on which there is a measure of parent representation. I have to say, however, that in my experience as an independent school parent I have not been generally aware of

very much liveliness among parents in respect of this representation. On rare occasions I have heard of activity and organization with a view to affecting policy. I have also heard an independent school headmaster say that he considers parent participation very important, and education too serious a matter to contemplate their exclusion.

For the most part, until something very remarkable happened to the world in the late sixties and early seventies, when authority, customs and mores underwent challenge and change, I do not think too many parents questioned the wisdom of education departments and school principals. They were the experts, and most people accepted their views. I suppose I was one of a small minority who questioned the received wisdom in choosing a progressive school for my children. Australia's highly centralized school systems had provided free and compulsory education, first at primary, and then into secondary levels. They had ensured that education was available in country towns and remote areas, that it was of roughly equal standard in large and small places, that staffing was adequate and that teachers' prospects for advancement were not limited by isolated postings. In a young country with sparse population outside the major cities, some equality of opportunity had been made available. This was no small achievement. The Australian Schools Commission has recently observed that there is still a case to be made for a measure of centralized administration, in the need to ensure equitable resource allocation, positive discrimination where appropriate and the encouragement of innovation. There are other pressures for the uniformity which a centralized system can offer. There is reassurance in a uniform system because it eliminates doubt about whether one's local program is up to standard. There is also comfort for that not inconsiderable proportion of the population whose family's mobility requires them to change from school to school. A centralized program minimizes the dislocation for such students.

The social changes of the last decades have been characterised by conflicting value systems, which have affected the older more homogeneous system in which there was more general consensus on agreed values. We have come to accept much more readily the holding of pluralist values, reflecting the confusion and uncertainties of our times, in which technological and economic change is undermining many of our old assumptions and practices. In Australia our sizeable population of immigrant origin additionally introduces a multi-cultural ingredient into the pluralist equation. These changes give force to the case for an element of parent participation in policy making for education. Since education is compulsory and children are immature and dependent, the parent is in a sense the client of the educational institution and of the system. It seems reasonable that educators have some measure of accountability to parents as well as to the community.

The general concept of parent involvement in education policy in government schools is quite recent. In independent schools parents tend to accept the educational program because they have chosen to patronise the school, and as I said before I do not think there is a high level of parent concern for educational policy although there is usually a small number of parents who are involved. I believe it is the increased complexity of society and

the tendency for bigness in government services, with administration increasingly remote from the workforce, which has led thoughtful education administrators to argue, as has the Australian Schools Commission, that decision-making should be devolved to local level wherever this is possible.

It has been well documented, and I think generally accepted, that the influence of home and family on educational outcomes is profound. The children who do best at school are those whose parents' values are those of the school, who themselves have reasonable educational attainment or aspirations and expectations for their children. Where there is conflict between the values of home and school it is observed that the child will usually resolve this conflict by rejecting those of the school. This could break the heart of all but the most staunch of educators were it seen to be an iron-clad rule. Fortunately it is not, and there are examples of children from apparently discouraging backgrounds who succeed educationally. This may be due to strong internal motivation or to particular teacher care and effort. This potential for achievement must surely give support and encouragement to those teachers who believe that it is within their power and professional obligation to help young minds develop and to break the cycle of disadvantage which binds so many children.

If, then, education is to be successful, meaningful and relevant to the majority, with whom to date its record is not always considered to have been good, then shared responsibility for decision-making will do more to ensure that congruence of values between home and school which is considered important to effectiveness, than will centralized decision-making to which parents have no commitment. To bridge the gap between the goals of education as our society formulates them (and they may be diverse), and the outcomes of education, there is clearly a need for parents and teachers to come together more closely as partners in the enterprise.

All this is very interesting theory, and those who have experience of parents in the educational setting, will say that it is all very fine, but that most parents are apathetic, uninterested, uninformed, unaware, and any number of other negative things. I cannot argue this claim, and I am sure that it presents a formidable problem. I can only say that I believe that most parents do want to do the best by their children, and that their children will not do as well as they could until parents are brought into the education scene as supporters, and their attitudes to education made more positive. I do believe strongly that schools and teachers have a strong responsibility to reach out to those parents who are seemingly uninterested or incapable, and persuade them of the value of education for their children and secure their collaboration. If they are unable to persuade the parents, then perhaps they should be asked themselves if their educational objectives do not require scrutiny and perhaps modification. It may not be too much to say that where necessary, schools may have to perform an educational function with parents, if their work with children is to be fruitful. I see this as a serious social responsibility for schools. Without a doubt the ill-educated, non-achieving young adult is one of the major economic and social problems of our society. There are comparatively few unskilled jobs remaining for the non-literate and non-numerate, and the trends are increasingly to skills. It is urgent that we find ways to raise the educational levels of the lowest achievers.

How are parents to be brought into educational policy-making? Really, ought they be? The exclusion of parents from decision-making in education has the force of custom. It takes years of training to produce a professional; doesn't the professional after all know best? Isn't there a danger that well organized minority interest groups will capture policy-making bodies? It has never really been any part of our tradition and we have little conditioning or preparation for it. It is heady stuff, and many parents are apprehensive. Many more are apathetic and uncertain even though some are confident and assertive. Many are at least somewhat intimidated by the educational apparatus — Government Departments and their officers, principals and teachers. We may be overawed by their professionalism, mystified by their jargon and suspicious that, like other experts they are reluctant to de-mystify and reassure us. Many will recall their own schooling with discomfort or other negative feelings, and this colours the relationship with their child's school.

Again, how do teachers react to the prospect of parental involvement in policy-making? Are they not apprehensive of what they see as interference, fearful of losing the well-organized and conflict-free situation in which they work best? They used to think the best parents were those they never saw: parents were seen only when there was trouble, when the child was a problem or when parents intruded into school matters and were 'trouble-makers'. (Which is not to say of course, that there have not always been some teachers who welcomed parent interest.) Then again in recent times the teachers' position has been strengthened by industrial organization and action, so that it is presently probably greater than ever before. How are teachers, who now have greater leverage *vis-a-vis* principals and government departments, going to feel about sharing some of that power with parents? Are they going to be inclined to resist it, and claim it is an invasion of their professionalism? Are they likely to welcome parent participation as an essential ingredient to good educational outcomes?

The Schools Commission has advocated parent participation, and the Commonwealth Minister for Education has recently supported this view, adding that as with any new initiative there is a need for experiment at first, gradually increasing in extent and responsibility. In Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania there have been administrative initiatives to increase parent participation, and in the Australian Capital Territory there has been in the last few years the most radical of all Australian ventures, where parents are represented at the system level, in the A.C.T. Schools Authority, and again on the School Boards which govern individual schools with wide ranging powers to determine curriculum. So there seem to be two new currents running. One is for greater responsiveness by schools to the needs and local conditions prevailing in individual communities in a changing society, and more realistic and achievable community expectations based on closer knowledge and understanding. The other is for a measure of parent participation in that local control, a notion which recognizes that parent collaboration with and commitment to the school is important to the success of its educational undertakings. It acknowledges that the child needs two kinds of caring, parental and professional, that these should be complementary and co-operative, rather than separate. Other arguments supporting parental

involvement point to the growth of mutual respect and understanding of each others' problems when parents and teachers work together on curriculum. Explaining what they are doing to laymen in lay language may also help teachers feel more comfortable with the curriculum.

The theory of parental involvement in the making of education policy is hard to fault, but many people will view it with caution. The Schools Commission advocated a slow and experimental approach, as does the Commonwealth Minister. I have to say that my own instincts go very much the same way. With little experience and tradition to guide procedures, much parental diffidence and apathy, and possible professional resistance, it is clear that parental involvement can be no instant panacea. The search for workable formulas will need time, experiment and goodwill aplenty.

Perhaps it will be useful to see what has emerged so far in the A.C.T. Although I live in Canberra, I regret to say that I am remote from the working of its schools, and I speak for the most part from no direct experience. I believe it is thought over all, to have gone well, a valuable experiment which may well have much wider application. The schools at three levels, primary, secondary and the secondary colleges serving years 11 and 12 particularly, have evolved diverse programs offering real choices to parents and students, who are free to attend any school within the system, free of zoning. Additionally it is claimed that a major attainment has been the fostering of an 'open' climate in the schools, with good interchange between parents and staff. (I know one parent who serves on a high school Board and who supports this claim, and feels that the work he does is rewarding and useful.) I have read too that among teachers, their professionalism has been encouraged. There has been apparently unprecedented curriculum activity, in which teachers have played a major role. Structured planning conferences with resource support available have sometimes been utilized. It has been suggested that there is much room too for curriculum evaluation, so that with the first burst of experimentation over, there can be consolidation and sound development.

It is probably true that there is a drift to the independent schools in the A.C.T. as there seems to be elsewhere in Australia, but I believe that reflects other factors, as it does in other parts of the country, and not the fact that parents are involved in policy making. (Indeed, the independent schools towards which the drift is taking place, also feature a parent share in School Councils.) The former chairman of the A.C.T. Schools Authority, Professor Hughes, has observed that in his view not enough control is granted to the School Boards. He says their right to decide on policy and curriculum is not matched by equal power with regard to staffing and to finance, and that this frustrates and circumvents their functioning. In fact he says, the School Boards have much less freedom to control the school's affairs than the corresponding Councils which govern independent schools. In 1978 he wrote that education in the A.C.T. presented a lively but confused and uncertain picture, with major promise for contribution and co-operation by a wide number and variety of individuals and groups. Despite problems arising from the complexity of the task "it remains" he said "a fascinating enterprise and one of real significance to the rest of Australia."

It is admitted that there have been some problems encountered in the A.C.T. experiment which will need to be overcome in the future, and again I speak only at second hand. One is that the time taken in arriving at decisions is lengthened markedly — it is a very different process from the simple, centralized decision-making handed down from above! Another is that there is a need for teachers to become more receptive to the idea of community involvement, and that no doubt is something which requires time, experience, and a commitment to the value of the exercise. If we believe that the professional ought to persuade the client of the rightness of his course of action, and ought also listen to the client and respond with sensitivity, then with goodwill ways should evolve to smooth parent-teacher interaction. Another problem which has been noted is the need for parents to avail themselves more actively of the opportunities for involvement open to them. It should not really be expected that in a few short years parents would move from the traditional exclusion and apathy into full participation — even in a rather unusual population such as that of the A.C.T. with its higher-than-average educational attainment and political awareness. New patterns are being forged, and they do not always develop ideally right away. Another set of issues focuses on the quality of the decisions made. These include the need to safeguard against the taking of unsound decisions as a result of pressure from well-organized special interest groups; another to resolve conflict when sectional interests are in conflict with the interests of the wider educational community. Finally there is the need to ensure that responsiveness to community needs does not undermine the stability of overall policy. All these problems are inherent in the democratic process, and as in the wider society, checks and balances will hopefully ensure that overall decisions made reflect consensus.

Dr Hedley Beare, who served as Chief Education Officer of the A.C.T. Schools Authority, also wrote in 1978 about the system. He supported the experiment and noted its strengths and the importance of its underlying values. He described it as a courageous development, full of difficulties, and successful under the circumstances "to be alive and well, as the first departure in a hundred years from the Colonial model." He noted the difficulties of the Chief Education Officer, which contrast greatly with those of the old-type departmental officer. With decision-making distributed through a host of participatory mechanisms, with a capacity to resolve impasses but less to act decisively, with an advisory role but legal constraints on his control, he is sometimes bound to feel impotent. Problems also arise in separating policy from administrivia. He noted an under-resourced head office hard-pressed to service committees, cope with the paperwork, and to manage and develop a system simultaneously. Certainly the A.C.T. system warrants study and I believe its experience is valuable to all Australia. However, it should be noted that I am not in any way qualified to present a complete or up-to-date picture even secondhand, and the experiment is too important to be taken lightly.

I have to say that in thinking about parental contribution and parental choice, the question of vouchers for education came to mind. I have read a little on the subject, and of course the theory is very interesting and not without some appeal. Certainly it is a complex and difficult idea, if it is to

work well. Despite the attractiveness of the idea in times when "big government" is criticized and the plea for individual choice and freedom is made strongly, there is so much difficulty in making vouchers a practical administrative option that there seems to have been relatively little experimentation with the scheme anywhere. My perusal of material on the Alum Rock experiment in California did however make mention of something I found very interesting. This is the creation of 'mini-schools' within a larger school. The 'mini-schools' offer curriculum choices to parents, and can include such offerings as a traditional program, an open-plan program, a bi-lingual program, or programs for children with special needs. These would also enable teachers to teach in programs which reflect their own interests in terms of curriculum as well as increase parent interest and satisfaction. Where schools are large enough to accommodate such a scheme they might well satisfy minority views in the parent community. I could mention here that one of our children attended a 'mini-school' within a Melbourne state primary school. It was a simulated rural school, with children spread over 6 grades in one classroom, and its rationale was the training of teachers for country areas. Our child, and we, were entirely happy with the experience, and my only criticism would be that there was too little social interaction between his class and the rest of the school. I would suggest that the mini-school idea would need to be so organized that it promoted many shared activities between the children in different programs.

If parent involvement in policy making in schools is to become a satisfactory and regular practice, and there is much sentiment and argument to favour the idea, I believe it is something we will have to work towards gradually. The Schools Commission has also heavily stressed the need for improved home-school relationships. I believe that what is needed first, and is needed urgently, is a great deal more openness of the school to the family and the community. There is a need to create an atmosphere in which parents feel more welcome in schools generally, for teachers to be willing to explain what they are doing professionally in ways that laymen can understand, and to attempt to win the support and co-operation of parents. I think it is not inconsistent for teachers in general, whose professionalism is increasing all the time, to regard parents as significant partners in the education of children. Parents have an enormous stake in the child, and they understand many of his special needs in a way which a teacher with many children to consider, cannot so easily do. Parents' endorsement and support of what the school is doing is critical to the teachers' success. In many cases parents' skills in an increasingly complex world can be useful and informative to the teacher.

In 1932 an American writer, Willard Waller, noted sadly that parents and teachers seemed to be natural enemies, predestined for the discomfort of each other. He observed that:

> If parents and teachers could meet often enough and intimately enough, and if both could have their say unreservedly, such modifications of school practice and parental upbringing might take place as would revolutionize the life of children everywhere.

That was 50 years ago, and I hope that we do have much better communication between parents and teachers now than existed then. Even if

we have made considerable gains, I am certain that much remains to be done in this field. I believe strongly that there is a need for structures and strategies, both formal and informal, which will encourage a genuine sharing of interest in the educational process as it affects the child. If parents and teachers will meet each other with mutual understanding of the difficulties and aspirations of the other, rather than as adversaries, their shared goodwill should help create a valuable and effective force.

What can be done where parents appear to have no interest? I have heard and read of numerous examples in the Australian experience where school principals and staffs have used innovative approaches and have fostered communication which set out to enlist the support and understanding of parents with very satisfactory results. Sometimes it seems necessary to take an interest in those underlying problems of the parents which inhibit their making a positive relationship with the school. In the case of Aboriginal parents in a Brisbane school, Aboriginal counsellors were employed by the school in order to encourage students to persist with secondary schooling. The counsellors liaised between home and school, acquainting each with the problems and perceptions of the other, and bridging the understanding gap. This led to modification of the curriculum aimed at fostering the pride and self-esteem of Aboriginal children. A deal of social and welfare help from the counsellors contributed to general benefits among parents and children. Classes for parents gave support, and transition programs for the move to high school and then to work, were all constructive. The success of the program demonstrated the need for similar work at primary school. Another example of positive and productive outreach took place in Victoria where a cluster of schools served an area in which there were significant social and economic problems. Social workers based in the schools helped relieve family distress in a complex of casework, preventive work, liaison and negotiation. They were able to advise teachers, schools and welfare agencies on the problems children faced at home. The social workers gained a useful overview of the problems and pressures facing teachers, and were able to indicate where the teachers' expectations were unrealistic. This led to a review of programs and enabled teachers to modify their perspectives.

It seems to me that this indicates a major area for consideration by schools. Where children are doing poorly it ought probably to be seen as urgent. It seems to me that teachers must include in their armoury a well-developed range of communication skills, as well as the motivation to bridge established relationships with parents. They need to feel the importance of improving the relationship between home and school, to handle it with grace where it comes easily, to reach out and win it where apathy, ignorance or cultural disadvantage render it unforthcoming. I believe that reasonable parents and teachers will find common ground, and will solve many problems without conflict. Good sense and the plural character of our modern society require negotiation between individuals and groups. When we have attained such improved relationships, I think that the role of the parent in education policy will emerge easily and comfortably, and that there will be little difficulty in the evolution of suitable formulas and mechanisms for participation.

THE COMMUNITY AND POLICY MAKING

THE HON. MR. JUSTICE K.J.A. ASCHE

Introduction

"There ought to be a law". How often have we heard this said in casual conversation. People will be talking about social behaviour, about inflation, about juvenile delinquency, about conservation, or any of those grand topics that affect all of us and at which we like to talk as instant experts — as is our right in a democratic society. Or we might be talking about smaller problems, personal to ourselves: the bus was late, the beer was flat, I can't get service, and I've lost my hat. Sooner or later, someone in the group, discussing the greater or lesser woes of the nation or the individual, will put on a statesmanlike look and an air of profundity and say, "Yes, there ought to be a law about it". And everyone will nod wisely and agree that Yes, that is the answer. There ought to be a law.

A lawyer, I suppose, would feel that some sort of compliment was being paid to a much maligned profession by the faith expressed in the ability of laws to cure all ills. But I doubt if it is really meant that way. It is rather an expression of an idealised expectation. Yet community expectations do ultimately achieve recognition. If enough people say, with enough force, enough times, that there ought to be a law, then sooner or later, from the pubs, clubs and kitchens of Australia, those views will infiltrate through newspapers, television commentaries and radio talkbacks, to the local branches of political parties and thence to the annual conventions of those parties and thence to an adoption of policy and finally to legislation. In the process, the original apparently simple solution will be attacked as too wide or too narrow, or too weak or too drastic. It will be revised, reshaped and restated ten thousand times to include contingencies discovered, or to exclude dangers foreseen. Finally, it will be hammered on the anvil of the parliamentary wordsmith or draftsman into a shape which he hopes will be sufficiently exact for the public servants who must administer it and the judges who must interpret it.

Such a process, applying as much to the repeal of old laws, as to the creation of new ones, is a continuous process, consonant with the social ferment of each age. In Australia, it is basically the same process in the Federal and State legislatures and in the municipalities. Using the language of Hans Kelsen, the eminent Austrian jurist, it is the process of converting a social norm into a legal norm. It is the most drastic way of strengthening the social norm because it arms it with legal sanctions against those who transgress.

But it is by no means the only way and indeed may be considered an exceptional way of reflecting public opinion. When people say "There ought to be a law", more often than not, they really mean "There ought to be a policy", i.e. the government or those who control whatever topic they are talking about, should direct its administration in a particular way. Yet the process I have mentioned as influencing the passing of laws also influences

ultimately the formulation of policies. When the noise level reaches a sufficient strength, it is picked up by the sensitive antennas of political parties and fed into the main grid.

A policy is more inexact than a law. A law must be in precise language and stand the test of judicial interpretation. Furthermore, once passed, it is difficult to alter. A policy is necessarily more flexible and its implementation can be slowed, or accelerated; or applied strongly in one area and hardly at all in another. And all this without suggesting that the policy itself is not being followed. Let me give you a simple example — the immigration policy. The government may be committed to a policy of encouraging immigration to Australia. But under that general aim it may encourage more immigration from some countries than from others; it may seek people with skills rather than people without skills; it may give priority to families with one member already in the country. It may expand or contract the numbers entering the country each year.

Now these changes, not of the general policy, but of particular implementation of the policy, are, presumably, ultimately dictated by what a government believes either is desired by the community or what a government believes is for the good of the community, irrespective of whether the community presently desire it or not. If a government proceeds on the latter assumption, it is taking a political risk which, no doubt, it justifies on the basis that public opinion will come round by the time of the next election. If it proceeds on the former, it is taking, to some extent, a political guess, it is assuming that its network of political listening posts has been feeding it the correct information.

The ultimate test, of course, is the ballot box; but here one has to ask to what extent does the community control policies, when an election comes once every three years and the citizen has one vote to reflect a like or dislike for a portfolio of policies, some of which he approves of and some of which he disapproves of. Yet, would a more completely democratic society, i.e. one in which the citizen was directly consulted more often be an improvement? There is, I believe, room for some expansion on the Swiss or American lines, where voters, either when voting at an election for a candidate or at a separate poll, are asked a specific question or series of questions, usually on some local issue. We do have the occasional referendums in Australia but almost always on a constitutional issue because the constitution lays down that process as the only way to change itself.

I doubt whether a constant questioning of the community would assist in day to day policy decisions. Let us assume that the government, at Federal, State or Municipal level, could develop some system of immediate communication with its citizens, or the vast bulk of them. Technologically, this would not be a very difficult feat these days, and I will forget for the moment the question of expense. It could already be achieved by some sort of mail vote or to use the rather ugly, but apt Americanism, by a 'phone in'. But extend it further. Assume a benign Big Brother where all the television sets are centrally linked not to spy on the citizen but each having a switch that says

'Yes', 'No', or 'Maybe'. Suppose this highly democratic government each night poses for its citizenry a question of policy — education, defence, road-widening, rate increases or whether the Shire President should wear robes? How would we all react and how valid would the answers be?

One obvious objection would be that the value of the answers would be in direct proportion to the amount of information the citizen had or was given. In other words, you couldn't really ask the question without feeding in, and expecting the citizen to digest, all the pros and cons. And that would lead you immediately to the obvious reply, which I am sure would be given sooner or later by a harassed citizen which would be, "I'm doing my job. You do yours. I elected you to govern. Go out and govern".

Direct requests to the community can therefore be of only limited and occasional value and at most on very broad areas. Yet the community vote is heard in various ways, through committees and sub-committees, welfare groups, professional associations, trade unions, employer bodies, school councils and a host of other organisations. Necessarily, it is usually a confused medley of voices, rather than one vote because there are usually not two sides, but at least a dozen sides to every question. The skill of the politician, or political administrator, is to interpret this voice as effectively as possible. In doing this, he takes those political risks and guesses for which, ultimately, he is responsible to the electorate.

Now one way of informing government is by inquiries, or Royal Commissions, or the like. No doubt, such an approach can be criticised, sometimes justly, as shelving or dodging an issue. But, in my view, that is a very short term view and the politician who sets up a commission for that reason gets a very short term advantage. For commissions come up with recommendations. And it is an uncomfortable situation to be asked why such recommendations are not implemented. True, various excuses can be made, and often the effect can be blanketed. But that exercise itself can be an embarrassment.

The Community and Governing Councils

I would like to examine, therefore, the work of certain bodies with which I have been connected in the educational field to examine whether, through them, the community can be said to be represented and to have had some effect or potential effect on educational policy. At this stage, I would like to present you with my qualifications to speak on such a subject. They are very simple; and consist of a vast ignorance. I have no teaching qualifications of any sort. I have been a tutor and a lecturer at tertiary institutions and I have set and corrected examination papers. All this was part-time and does not qualify me in the slightest to teach or talk about teaching. I know very little of the day-to-day problems of a teacher or the administrative world in which he moves, and what I do know is probably wrong. Over the years, in various councils, I have heard mysterious abbreviations or acronyms bandied about, such as EFTS, VPSEC, RISEC, TESL, TEC and ACER. I believe I know what some of these mean; but I would not swear to that in a court of law. For the

purposes of this august and specialist assembly, I am here as the non-specialist, as the representative of the community, lest it be said that you have been too specialist and too restrictive. I am the token black.

Now, ignorance of, and unfamiliarity with a subject may seem a strange qualification to render one appointed to the governing board of a professional body. Yet, it has been accepted for many years that lay persons should serve on school and college, and university councils. The *National Inquiry into Teacher Education* says this (p.29):

> There has been a trend in the last decade to increase community participation in schooling, but to this point it has not usually developed sufficiently to bring school and community into a really close relationship, productive of a high level of mutual understanding . . . If the movement continues and the participation extends further into formal processes and structures, it is likely to have a considerable impact on future purposes and patterns of schooling.

I would be surprised if there was any real opposition to such a policy, but I would not be as pessimistic about the present situation. How far community representatives are successful in participation depends on many factors. The strength of their personality, the co-operation of the professionals, the readiness to work, dig and inquire, their enthusiasm and their commonsense. Ideally, they should have the effect of forcing the professionals to re-assess their own work, and not retreat into the jungle of jargon. For just as it is true that it is a bad law which cannot be explained in simple terms to 12 ordinary citizens sitting as a jury, so it is a bad educational theory or practice that cannot be explained to and understood by the lay members of a college council.

Now, the usual college council — and I use that as a generic term — has these days a familiar structure. There are administrators, teachers, students and lay persons. That, of course, is a little over-simple; because the administrators may also be teachers, and the teachers, administrators. And some teachers will also be staff representatives, having sometimes different interests from the administrators. The lay members will be roughly equal to the professionals. The Chairman will almost inevitably be a lay person and the task of explaining, defending, or asking approval, for administrative action will fall on the principal. In any college where the system is working well, voting will not reflect any suggestion of lay persons versus professionals. Certainly, in the institutions with which I have been concerned, I have seen little evidence of bloc voting and in most contested issues you will find members of teaching, administrative and lay groups on either side of the fence. And this is as it should be.

At this stage, two questions should be asked:

(a) Do those lay persons on councils really represent the community?

(b) Can they influence the educational policy of the college to any significant extent?

My answer to those questions in each case is a qualified 'Yes'. On the first question, there can certainly be two criticisms. First, it may be difficult to say that if, out of a local community of, say, 250,000, you take 5 or 6 persons without any election procedures, then the community has a voice. The only real safeguard here is careful selection, usually of persons who have shown some community involvement; and here I must commend the Victorian government and I believe the same can be said for other governments, in resisting temptation to appoint members on political affiliation. The second criticism is that you cannot have a span of community activities, with only 5 or 6 persons. However, this criticism must be rejected on pragmatic grounds. Short of inflating your council to unwieldly proportions, you cannot get guild representation.

The type of council I have described relates to the public sector of education. I have been only indirectly concerned with school or college councils in the private sector, but they too have their lay representatives who represent the community; although the community there understood is necessarily narrower. Obviously, a church school will look for representation from members of that church, and an established private school will place considerable reliance on alumnae. But the principle is still there that those who practise a particular discipline may see things somewhat too narrowly unless there is a leavening of those with experience in other fields.

How then can a lay person have any influence on educational policy-making in a school or college? In my experience, that influence comes through sub-committees in which the particular expertise of the lay person, or his more general experience, can be felt. Every Council will have at least a finance sub-committee, an academic sub-committee, staffing sub-committee and a policy sub-committee. Of course, there are likely to be others — buildings, legislation, special funds, public relations, and staff/student relationships etc. Of the four sub-committees first mentioned, the academic sub-committee will usually remain the preserve of the professionals. But the weight of the lay person will be felt in the others. The finance sub-committee will have as its Chairman, a businessman or accountant. It will be subject to the constraint already mentioned at this conference and well known to all — namely that 85-90% of any school or college finance is already earmarked for salaries. But in the remaining area, the lay members are usually predominant in the decisions as to where and when to apply the balance.

On staffing questions, the special knowledge of the administration necessarily carries considerable weight but that does not prevent a competent lay member from exerting proper influence. Indeed, my own experience is that lay members are seen as welcome on staffing committees as saving personal embarrassment in delicate questions of staff relations. Finally, on policy matters, the lay members should, and usually do, have substantial influence. I think it is true to say that the initiation of policy usually comes from the staff and administration; while the practical implications are brought out by the lay members. But, again, this is a generalisation because I wish to emphasise that very rarely does a 'them against us' situation apply and the divisions are not dictated by source of appointment.

The community, therefore, has representation in educational institutions and can influence the policy of those institutions. Certainly, there are limitations, particularly, as we have seen, in the financial areas. Furthermore, the institutions are subject to the overall control of the Ministry or the Director General, and in Victoria, VPSEC, the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission; and these bodies can exercise rigorous control by funding or direction or in the last resort, by extinguishing them or decreeing amalgamations which effectively destroy their individuality — a process which we have seen occurring in drastic measure in 1981. Yet, within their local limits, just as a local municipality, they enjoy autonomy and some freedom of choice.

An interesting example, which I use because I am familiar with it, is the structure of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). This is a great institution, proud of its history and deserved reputation and with a student body, including external students, of 32,000; making it, I believe, the biggest educational institution in Australia. A few years ago, RMIT went through a considerable upheaval in its Council representation, the aim being to endeavour to represent all parts of the Institute, so far as possible, and, so far as possible, the community. This was not easy. RMIT is both a technical college and a C.A.E. It has, to begin with, separate representation for Technical College Teaching Staff, Technical College General Staff, Advanced College Academic Staff, Advanced College General Staff, Technical College Students and Advanced College Students. Then it has Boards to deal with academic matters in both the Advanced College and the Technical College. From the community, it has traditionally had at least 3 representatives from the Trade Unions as a proper recognition of its origins as the Working Men's College, and it has always had a strong outside representation from the fields of engineering, architecture, and commerce, and recently, law and social service. All these had to be included.

The result of the re-organisation — and even then to the disappointment of some — was a Council of 38, fairly evenly distributed between lay members and professionals. This is a somewhat daunting number and, since election, or nomination, to the Council is prized, attendance is always high and debate, vigorous. In many ways, a Chairman's nightmare. Yet RMIT Council reflects, probably as closely as one can get without being too cumbersome, what seems an eminently satisfactory meld of internal and external interests; and its policies, so far as they can operate within the general educational frameworks, are independent, forward-looking and, again as far as one can see and admitting that there is always a great deal of subjectivity in this, reflect the views of the community.

In March, 1981, and after considerable discussion in committees and in the Council, RMIT adopted its Goals and Directions to 1990. Because, I believe, this is a significant illustration of the community views through the outside representatives of RMIT, affecting and being affected by the views of the academic, I would like to set them out for you.

- achieve excellence in all its educational programmes and in all those activities which contribute to them;

- provide educational programmes which help people fulfil useful roles in the community by enabling students to acquire skills and knowledge relevant to their existing or intended occupations, and at the same time, for their broad, personal development;

- adapt existing programmes and develop appropriate new programmes in order to assist people develop the capability to contribute effectively to a changing society;

- foster in students and staff the creativity, adaptability, confidence and capability to meet the changing needs and circumstances of their lives and their chosen occupations;

- develop among all staff and students an increased capacity and willingness to accept socially responsible roles and a greater awareness and sensitivity to the complex interactions between society and technology;

- provide a diversity of post-secondary educational programmes selected and structured to cater for the differing needs of students;

- develop a more significant programme in applied research and development, problem solving and consulting;

- foster interaction and co-operative activities with all sections of the community;

- co-operate with and assist other educational institutions; and

- develop an environment which fosters within the RMIT community, social interaction and cultural and recreational activity.

Of course, one can criticise on the grounds of generality or pious hopes but I assure you these goals are seriously meant and seriously being applied at RMIT. I put them forward as a concrete example of community influence in policy making.

The Community and Public Inquiries

Now, I have so far spoken of community influences through representation on councils of schools or colleges. I acknowledge that there are some limitations but I believe that the community voice is heard. It may be that it is only the more articulate voice of the community that is heard, because it is true that only those who have the time and the energy and the capacity to put views forward will be effective on a council. We often hear complaints that some 'silent majority' is left out of decision-making bodies. I am a little dubious about the 'majority' part of that statement. If there is a clear majority, there will almost certainly be someone putting their views forward. If there is a group, not a majority, but nevertheless unrepresented, whose views should be heard, that group will usually, in our democratic society, find

a champion until they can put their own case. Indeed — and I say this as no carping criticism — there seem to be so many champions in our society looking for causes, that a natural gravitation will direct the one to the other.

But representation through councils is on a lower level of policy making, because the policies are determined in the cabinets and the ministries, and the offices of the Director-Generals. What influence does the community have on those decisions? First, there is the broad aspect already mentioned, that the politician will usually be as alert as he can to community views since he must always bear in mind the day of judgment which comes around once every three years.

In Victoria, although I recognise the ultimate arguments for the replacement of VIC and SCV with VPSEC, I regret that the community representation which was a feature of those bodies, is lost to the government. Are there other ways in which the government can gauge community wishes on policies and if so, can the government implement those wishes?

Between 1978 and 1980, the governments of every state, except Tasmania, set up inquiries into teacher education. In addition, the Commonwealth produced its own — the Auchmuty inquiry. The membership of these inquiries comprised people with professional qualifications and experience in education and some people with qualifications or experience outside that field. The Queensland Inquiry, for instance, had as its Chairman, Professor Bassett, whom you have honoured this week, and Dr Botsman. These inquiries went about their task in various ways but all called for submissions. Those submissions came, many from educational bodies of a professional nature, but there were others from groups of lay persons interested in the subject and in some states, there was a very wide spectrum. I notice in the NSW Inquiry, for instance, there were submissions from employer associations, ethnic associations, parent associations, religious, and women's associations. There was similar representation in Victoria, together with dance groups, community services, unemployed youth and even — and I may say with thoughtful contributions — the Bicycle Institute of Victoria and the State Bicycle Committee.

The point I make about this is that there was a request to the community and a response. In Victoria certainly, and I believe in the other inquiries, that request was followed up by seminars at which the contributors could expand and discuss their submissions. The Victorian Enquiry went one step further. It produced an Interim Report and then went into recess and waited for the National Report. Having received that, it reconvened and made comments and comparisons on the National Report, and conducted a one-day seminar at which various speakers of distinction in the education field were invited to give their views of the reports and lead discussion. The Victorian Enquiry, in the light of those matters, then produced a short final report making some relatively small changes to its original recommendations and summarising these final submissions, and the discussion at the seminars.

The net result, therefore, was an enormous information gathering exercise throughout Australia on the question of teacher education. The community

had been consulted — or at least, had been given an opportunity to be consulted. It could not be unfair to say that those who had not contributed were not interested. The fact that many of the contributors were experts in the field and some of those might be assumed to have some self-interest, could not be a criticism because that was to be expected. It would have been strange indeed if experts were disqualified on this ground. Submissions were not the less valuable for expressing strong views. It was the task of the committee to evaluate, and that committee in Victoria, and elsewhere, consisted of educationalists and lay persons and, I would hope, intelligent lay persons. Could it, therefore, be said that the numerous recommendations were endorsed by community acceptance? Again, my answer would be a qualified Yes, or, in the words of Bruce Bairnsfather's Ole Bill, "If you knows of a better 'ole, go to it." That is, if you can suggest a better way of asking for community guidance on this subject, you tell us.

The reality is that a great proportion of the community would have no thoughts on the subject at all, and would therefore have to be considered neutral. If someone started to talk about his 'silent majority' who must be asked even if they did not want to answer, then a nationwide Gallup Poll would suffer two defects: first, if the questions were phrased with sufficient particularity to give the answers any value, it would elicit a vast number of "don't knows"; secondly, if the questions were framed in the usual simplistic terms of these polls, e.g. "Do you think that a teacher should have study leave on full pay?", the answers may be of little assistance. Perhaps the pragmatic test is this — if a government wished to implement the recommendations, it would be justified in claiming that it had consulted and been advised by persons who collectively had a broad span of skills and experience and who themselves had consulted and been advised by such experts and members of the community who felt sufficiently strong to assist. I doubt that one could put the argument any more strongly than that, but I would be content with that position.

Let me take another example of testing community attitudes, as a preliminary to suggesting policy. I make no apology for drawing from my own experience because that seems to me the most valid way of discovering things. The *Institute of Family Studies* was founded in 1980. Its functions, amongst others, are to act as a gatherer of information and statistics on all aspects of the family, to conduct studies on families in Australia and make those studies available. One of its first projects was a series of nation-wide seminars at which submissions were called for and the views of the public solicited. This created, and has continued to create, great response because, while not everyone has views on teacher education, everyone in the community has views and often very strong views, on family policies. The result has been a great body of material which the Institute is still assessing. It was not only a useful exercise; it was an essential one, because one can hardly speak of national attitudes on families without some idea of what the community thinks. Certainly, the Institute received many divergent views. And certainly, the Institute will follow that up with research. The point is that the seminar system does illustrate a method of gaining information on community attitudes which can be utilised on formulating family policy.

Returning then to the committees on teacher education, why have the numerous recommendations so painstakingly gathered, not yet been put into practice? The answer is partly in the rapid changes in the educational scene over the last 18 months, and partly in the fact that the recommendations themselves are based on a policy of gradualism. Even in the more favourable climate of some years ago, it would not have been expected that all recommendations be immediately implemented. However, I would like to think of these recommendations ticking away as some sort of policy time bomb for a government. I appreciate that financial considerations will militate against immediate implementation of some, but, I believe, that others may well be seen as reasonable and come into force.

Of course, I do not suggest that the Reports were only a thermometer for testing public opinion. They carry a great deal of information, history, statistical analysis and reasoned argument on specialised subjects. But, for the purposes of this paper, I have concentrated on the community contribution. I believe that contribution has been properly taken into account and that the procedures adopted should be used to greater and more permanent effect.

There is a convincing argument for some advisory body to the government, consisting in equal parts of lay persons and educationalists, to advise the government on community reaction, to discuss, between themselves and with interested members of the community, developments in education and, from time to time, to seek community views. Such a body, albeit restricted to teacher education, was recommended by the *Victorian Enquiry into Teacher Education* and was one of the recommendations expressly strengthened in the Final Report:

> In the rapidly changing society anticipated over the next 25 years, it will be essential for those in government to be kept informed of changes and new requirements in teacher education in Victoria. To achieve this the Committee strengthens recommendation R6.1 to read as follows:
>
> > The Committee recommends the establishment and adequate servicing of an advisory committee on teacher education with all those functions necessary to advise the Minister in the sound management and continuing development of the education of teachers in Victoria. Membership of this committee could be drawn from employers of teachers, teacher educators, school and pre-school councils and committees, teacher and parent organisations and other interested groups.
>
> The functions of an advisory committee would include the monitoring of changing needs, advising the Minister regarding the implementation of the recommendations of this Inquiry, establishing an on-going investigation into entrance selection and the consideration of other issues relevant to the education of teachers in Victoria.

Conclusion

All speakers at this conference have directly, or indirectly, referred to the substantial changes of the last 2 years or so. It is interesting to speculate how far public opinion has brought these changes about. There does seem to have been a shift in community attitudes to education. Perhaps this is inevitable. The heady days of a decade ago, where education was considered the

"soverayne specific" for all ills, have vanished and a more moderate expectation is abroad. The *1978 Review of Teacher Education in Queensland* (p.20) puts it in this way:

> In the years following 1972 the total outlay from Canberra of funds for education almost trebled. The Federal Government took over expenditure on universities, colleges of advanced education and teachers' colleges. In the field of schools, pre-schools and child care, the total Commonwealth allocation more than quadrupled . . . At present, a period of consolidation and self-searching has succeeded a period of expansion in education. To an extent, the schools are operating in a hostile environment. There is some confusion about educational goals and pessimism that education has failed to lead to fuller and more affluent lives. A concern with the rounded education of children is being supplanted by demands that the schools should operate in a pragmatic manner, concentrating on the development of work skills. At a time when there has been a polarisation of opinion, debate is inevitably rekindled over the respective claims of general vocational and technical education.

Similarly, the Williams Committee, in 1979, after referring to the significant rise in expenditure on education (from 2.1% of GDP in 1956-57, to 5.8% in 1976-77) and to the dramatic change in the respective roles of the State and Commonwealth governments, remarked: "It was inevitable that increases in education expenditure relative to increases in GDP would lead, at some stage, to measures to check further increases." (p.43).

Hence, the Commonwealth Government can be seen to be responding to community pressures in its present call for revisions and amalgamations. I would question whether some of the measures taken are not "too rash, too ill-advised, too sudden", and I regret the fate of many CAE's who, ten years ago, were being urged to "go forth, and multiply", and are now being reproached for failure to practise birth control. But, I would not suggest that the government has not, in the main, read the community aright.

That brings me directly to the teachers and educators themselves. If changes are sought in the educational field, they are the ones to educate the community to these changes. Teachers are hard working, intelligent, and articulate individuals. It is only a naive person who nurses this extraordinary belief that the 'world of work' is a planet uninhabited by teachers. Every area of employment has its own tasks, difficulties, and language. Why teaching should be the one area so different from accountancy, bank-telling, bus driving or crane operating, that it should be considered totally removed from them, I do not know. But, if there is such a belief abroad, teachers had better get out and rebut it. I am not suggesting that they should get into 'the world of work', which they are already in. I am suggesting that if they want the community to adopt policies, they should lead and they should publicise. Teachers should become more political. I don't mean that in the sense of trade unions, though, of course, they have their place. But I mean it in the broader sense that teachers, being members of the community, should exercise that right which every member of the community has to persuade, inform, discuss, cajole, harangue, hypnotise, or convince other members of the community. In short, you must use all legitimate methods to put your case, always for the purpose of carrying the community with you. For without that, your cause is lost.

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A ROLE FOR THE SCHOOL COUNCIL IN THE POLICY PROCESS

BRIAN J. CALDWELL

The formal recognition of the principal as a policy maker is a relatively recent development. A decade ago, official literature invariably reflected the view that policy making was the responsibility of government and senior levels of administration. The principal was very much the implementer of policy. Current literature as well as themes and topics in conferences and seminars suggest that the principal is now also recognised as a policy maker or, at the very least, the key person in the policy process at the school level. An expanded role for the community and the evolution of school councils has to a large extent paralleled the change in the role of school principal.

School Councils in Australia

Expectations for school councils have been high. In Victoria, for example, the policy of the government, as set out in the *White Paper on Strategies and Structures for Education in Victorian Government Schools*[1] included the following:

> The Government accepts the principle that increasing responsibility should be given to schools and school councils. Schools will be encouraged to take greater responsibility in developing educational policies and curriculum, in establishing bases for forward planning and consulting with parents and communities, and in publishing and explaining details of school policy and instructional programmes. In consultation and agreement with the school council, the principal will prepare a school policy and in consultation with the teaching staff will arrange for the development of school programmes. (Paragraph 5.3)
>
> The Government will continue to enhance the role of school councils in policy development and implementation and to ensure that the interests of children have the major consideration. The objective will be to ensure that councils perform their important role in providing independent advice and perspective. (Paragraph 5.4)
>
> School councils and principals will together be required to develop policy statements and to consult in the process with parents, teachers, students and the wider community . . . (Paragraph 5.6).

In Tasmania, expectations for school councils in the policy process are evident in a reading of the *White Paper on Tasmanian Schools and Colleges in the 1980s.*[2] While guidelines for implementation are currently under consideration, the Government envisages a partnership between school and community in the development and evaluation of school policy. Paragraph 4.48, for example, proposed school councils which should be able to do each of the following:

1. work out a policy for the community use of the school's facilities;
2. take part in such activities as setting the school's policy and planning its curriculum;

3. help plan building extensions or modifications;

4. prepare the school's budget; and

5. help the school staff assess the general working of the school.

A role for school councils in the policy process is now well-established in other parts of Australia. In the spirit of an earlier memorandum from the then Director-General, Mr A.W. Jones, entitled *Freedom and Authority in the Schools*, the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia chaired by Peter Karmel recommended in 1971 that:

> The powers of primary and secondary school councils should be extended to enable them to discuss matters of general educational policy within the school, and headmasters should make available to councils such information as will help in their deliberations.[3]

The result was that although "there have been considerable differences in the roles of councils . . . there are now fewer . . . confining their interests purely to fund-raising, and more taking an interest in educational policy."[4]

In the Australian Capital Territory, the *Schools Authority Ordinance 1976*, which came into operation on January 1, 1977 directed that school boards, established on an interim basis in 1974, "determine the educational policies to be implemented at the school" within the framework of policy set by the A.C.T. Schools Authority.[5]

While implementation to date has largely been limited to two states — South Australia and Victoria — and the A.C.T., with Tasmania to follow, it is clear that there is similar, increasing interest in school-based policy making for government schools throughout Australia.[6] For non-government schools, there has of course always been some measure of local policy making. For the nation as a whole, the Schools Commission continues to press for devolution and an expanded role for school-based personnel and the community in the decision making process.[7]

Despite these developments and expectations there have been modest if not negative assessments of the extent to which meaningful change has occurred. Walker, for example, suggests that councils have met with only limited success.[8] Pettit is more critical, as suggested by the following excerpts:

> In short, there is nothing about the extent of political devolution (to boards and councils) in the provision of Australian education that merits particular attention.
>
> Although the 1970 enquiry produced a flurry of activity within the administration and the teaching profession in South Australia, public interest in school councils has remained largely dormant.
>
> To a large extent the opportunities for developing a unique education system in the Australian Capital Territory have been frustrated and the objective of shared control of schools through the boards has been lost.
>
> (In Victoria) Despite some minor setbacks the overall changes, mostly brought about by the interested few, gave a greater opportunity for shared decision-making and were valuable in raising the general level of community interest in councils . . . It quickly became clear to the more effective councils that central control of finance

and staffing procedures, which was totally insensitive to local needs, effectively emasculated the power to create school policy and planning: there was too little control over *all* of a school's resources.[9]

Purpose of Paper

It is not the intent of this paper to examine the merits or otherwise of school councils. Indeed, it is acknowledged that maintaining the focus of debate on school councils may, in some contexts, actually divert attention from appropriate, meaningful and effective community involvement. The assumption is made, however, that councils have the potential to play a valuable and powerful role in planning, implementing and evaluating the school program. It is the belief of this writer that a policy framework has much to offer those who seek the fulfillment of this potential.

The paper is organised in the following manner. The context in terms of a centralisation-decentralisation continuum is established first. Policy is then defined and distinguished from terms such as goals, objectives, regulations and procedures. The need for school policy is made clear. A model is provided which is both descriptive and prescriptive: it describes the manner in which policy issues invariably arise and describes what often does occur and what should occur when a policy response is made. Guidelines based on the model are then offered for: (1) roles for school councils, principals and staff of the school; (2) policy analysis; (3) formulating policy; (4) policy implementation; and (5) policy evaluation.

The Centralisation-Decentralisation Continuum

It is useful at the outset to establish the place of school councils in the centralisation-decentralisation continuum of policy making. This section of the paper is, of course, applicable mainly to councils in the government school system, though the analysis is pertinent to systemic non-government schools.

The context may be summarised as follows:

1. The State Government has the right and responsibility to make policy for education. The Education Department usually has an important role, through the Director-General, in the formulation of policy. The Education Department, under the provisions of enabling legislation, has the responsibility of implementing.

2. Subject to the constraints which are implicit in the first statement, the principal and staff of each school have the responsibility of providing educational services which match the needs of students. The extent to which the principal and staff may make policy is determined by the enabling legislation and the policy of the government. In the absence of a formal specification of responsibilities, the extent to which the principal and staff may make policy is also determined by the leadership style and skills of the principal as well as the interests and skills of staff.

3. Where policy may be made at the school level, enabling legislation, the policy of the government or the leadership style of the principal may result

in the establishment of a school council which may be involved in the policy process for some or all of the policies which fall within the purview of the school. Further, for each policy area in which the council may have a role, that role may be either "policy influencing" or "policy determining".

4. The context may be affected by a number of environmental factors which may be generally classified as technological, legal-governmental, demographic, economic, socio-cultural and political.[10]

5. Policy may be made in a number of areas which may be generally classified as curriculum/instruction, staff personnel, school-community relations, resource management, support services and operations.

The context set out above is illustrated in Figure 1. In general, it is apparent that the policy arena for the school and the school council has expanded in recent years. The same phenomenon has been observed or proposed in the United States where such practices have been described variously as school-based management or school-site management.[11] Contrary to what this writer sees as the prevailing view in Australia, the scope of what has occurred or is proposed in this country as far as school councils are concerned exceeds that found in the United States. Jerome Murphy of Harvard's Graduate School of Education made the same observation in a recent comparative study:

> . . . Australia has been flirting with the idea of parental control of schooling through the creation of parent councils at each and every school. If successful, this would devolve parental control further than has traditionally been the case in America, where local boards operate at the school district level.[12]

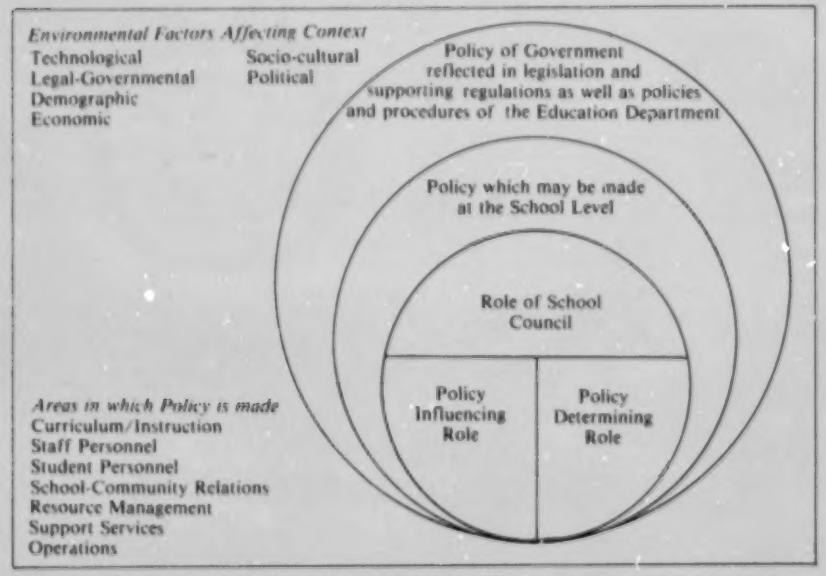

Fig. 1. The context for the School Council role in the policy process.

The Nature of Policy

It is important at this point to make clear what is meant by the term 'policy' and to distinguish policy from goal or aim, objective, regulation or rule, procedure, job description and by-law.

While definitions and distinctions abound[13] the following is considered appropriate in the school setting:

> A school policy is a major guideline for future action. It is generalised, philosophically based, and implies an intention and pattern for taking action. It creates a framework, with some basis for discretion, within which the principal and the school staff can discharge their duties with clear direction.[14]

This definition is illustrated in the sample policy on homework at the high school level contained in Figure 2. The sample statement reflects a relationship between principal and school council of a kind apparently envisaged in the Victorian White Paper.

The guidelines illustrated in Figure 2 provide the basis for the preparation of rules and procedures. A *rule* or *regulation* is a statement which directs action, usually by specifying individuals responsible for implementing the terms of a policy. The preparation of rules is thus the first step in the implementation of policy. A *procedure* is a further specification of who does what, how and in what sequence in implementing the terms of a policy. Some rules and procedures may be mandatory; that is, they specify what action *shall* take place, while others may be discretionary; that is, they specify what action *may* occur. These characteristics of rules and procedures are illustrated in Figure 3 with sample statements associated with the policy on homework contained in Figure 2.

SCHOOL HOMEWORK

Philosophical basis

The School Council believes that regular homework is a valuable aspect of the learning process and contributes to the development of sound study habits. The Council therefore recommends that the principal implement such a practice according to the following guidelines:

Guidelines

1. Each child will be assigned homework in each subject on a regular basis.
2. While the amount of homework will vary according to age and learning needs, every child will be assigned some homework on each day of the school week, with at least two days per week assigned for each subject in the core curriculum.
3. Teachers will be responsible for reviewing the homework assignment of each child.

Basis of discretion

The principal may depart from these guidelines when he believes the interests of a child or other unusual circumstances require a different arrangement.

Framework within which principal can discharge his duties: the basis for rules and procedures

Fig. 2. Sample statement of policy on homework at the high school level.

A *goal* or *aim* is not a policy. A goal is a statement of broad direction, general purpose or intent; it is general and timeless and is not concerned with a particular outcome at a particular moment in time. Goals are often implicit in statements of policy; for example, the philosophical basis for the policy on homework illustrated in Figure 1 suggests that a goal of the school is "the development of sound study habits". Similarly, an *objective* is not a policy. An objective is a statement of outcome, often expressed in measurable terms, which is to be achieved in a particular period of time. Objectives are often set in association with the implementation or evaluation of policy; for example an objective for the policy on homework illustrated in Figure 2 may be "at least 80% of a sample of parents surveyed after one year will express a high degree of satisfaction with the time spent by their children on assigned homework".

Neither *job descriptions* nor *by-laws* can be considered statements of policy. Job descriptions may, of course, arise from policy; for example, the policy on homework illustrated in Figure 2 suggests that one statement in a job description for teachers in the school having such a policy may be "Teachers

A SAMPLE RULE ON SCHOOL HOMEWORK

1. The head of each department shall be responsible for ensuring that homework practice in the subject concerned is consistent with the policy of School Council.

2. The head is responsible for referring unusual circumstances to the principal for resolution.

SAMPLE PROCEDURES ON SCHOOL HOMEWORK

1. The general practice for homework in each department shall be determined annually during planning meetings in the first week of the school year.

2. The practice in each department shall be communicated to parents in the first issue of the school newsletter.

3. In accordance with general practice in the department, each teacher shall establish a schedule and shall determine the manner in which homework is to be reviewed.

4. The teacher may advise parents of the schedule and other details in a special written communication.

Fig. 3. Sample rules and procedures for policy on homework at the high school level.

shall be responsible for setting homework in accordance with the policy of the school and for reviewing the homework assignment of each child". By-laws for the operation of meetings of staff or school council are only related to policy in the sense that they will reflect or describe the manner in which the policy is to be made.

It is evident from the foregoing that a high degree of complexity is possible, even for an issue such as homework, when goals must be established, policy developed and supporting regulations and procedures formulated. Such may indeed be the case, with the policy handbook for a large school offering a diverse program in a volatile environment being a very weighty, often-changed document. A small school, on the other hand, offering a relatively straightforward program in a somewhat stable environment may have a small collection of rarely amended policy-related documents. Despite such contrasts, the policy process in any setting is clearly a very demanding affair. It might be wise, therefore, to identify the benefits of such efforts before proceeding further.

The benefits of well written and continuously updated policies may be couched in the following terms:

1. Policies demonstrate that the school is being operated in an efficient and businesslike manner. When policies are written, there is rarely ambiguity with regard to the goals of the school and how the school is to be administered.

2. Policies ensure to a considerable extent that there will be uniformity and consistency in decisions and in operational procedures. *Ad hoc* or whimsical decision making is made difficult with good policy.

3. Policies must be consistent with state statutes and regulations. Policies thus add strength to the position of the principal and staff when possible legal actions arise.

4. Policies help ensure an orderly conduct of meetings. Valuable time will be saved when a new problem can be handled quickly and effectively because of its relationship to an existing policy.

5. Policies foster stability and continuity: members of school council, administrators and teachers may come and go but well written and constantly updated policies remain. Such policies make clear the general 'direction' of the school, and therefore facilitate orientation of newly appointed members of council and staff of the school.

6. Policies give the school community a basis for assessing the program of the school. Written and publicly disseminated statements of policy show that the school council and the staff of the school are willing to be held accountable for their decisions.

7. Policies assist the school council and the staff of the school in the assessment of their own operations and of the instructional program of the school.

8. Policies clarify the council-principal-staff functions and responsibilities. The entire staff of the school can work with greater efficiency, satisfaction and commitment when school policies are well known, understood and accepted.

The Policy Process — A Very Political Affair

Turning now to the process of policy making, one is immediately struck by the differences when a comparison is made with more routine decision making. Routine decision making usually entails a response to recurring, simple situations in which objectives are clear and generally accepted. Consequences of alternatives are readily apparent. Policy matters, on the other hand, are invariably associated with a combination of problems. A diversity of interests and preferences may result in vague and conflicting objectives among those who are directly or indirectly involved. This diversity along with elements of uncertainty and risk make it difficult to anticipate the consequences of alternative courses of action. These conditions would appear to characterise in very precise terms the situation which faces principals and school councils in Australia.

That such a process is highly political is also evident. J.D.B. Miller's definition of a political situation illustrates:

> The essence of a political situation as opposed to one of agreement and routine, is that someone is trying to do something about which there is not agreement; and is trying to use some form of government (such as a school council) as a means and as a protection. Political situations arise out of disagreement.[15]

In this regard, one observation about the work of principals in some Australian states is in order. Without empirical evidence as support, it is the writer's judgement, based on reading and discussion since his return and on his knowledge of the principalship in Canada and the United States, that the uncertainty and risk associated with the position and the political nature of the work of principals in general exceeds that of their counterparts in North America. What comes to mind, especially, is the number of individuals, groups and organisations with whom principals must work and who are in conflict within and among themselves over goals, ends and means.

One may turn to a variety of theoretical perspectives to explore the process further. Harman, for example, has identified no less than twelve models or theories of policy making and the policy process.[16] The systematic view illustrated in Figure 4[17] appears to be particularly valuable, being both descriptive and prescriptive in nature. It describes the manner in which policy issues invariably arise. It also describes what often does occur and suggests what should occur when a policy response is made. The relationships and language of this model provide a suitable framework for an analysis of the policy role of the school council.

A Systematic View

Figure 4 suggests that there are three main components in a systematic view of the policy 'field': (a) the operating environment, (b) the constituents, and (c) the related policies.

The *operating environment* includes a whole network within which exist unexpressed desires, wants and needs.[16] Once expressed, they become demands, which when articulated and aggregated, focus enough attention to warrant consideration by those responsible for policy. For example, the number of comments from parents and teachers related to homework practices may have built up over time to the point where they constitute a demand. A response is required by the principal and others.

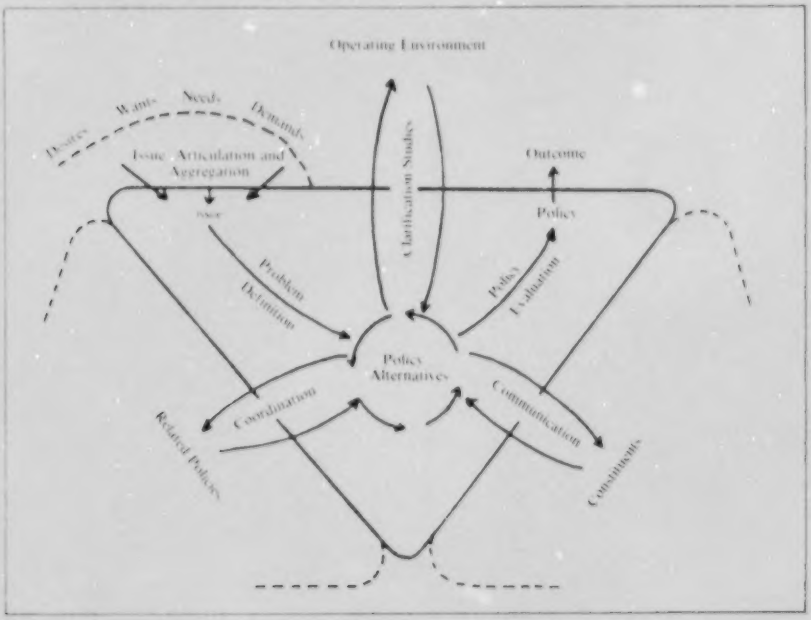

Fig. 4. A Systematic View of the Policy Process.[17]

The *constituents* or actors include those individuals or groups who have (a) articulated the various "desires, wants, needs and demands;" (b) an interest in the outcome because of the values they hold, goals they seek, or concerns they may have if particular outcomes emerge or do not emerge; (c) a stake in the outcome because of their likely involvement in implementing policy or their life/work will be affected by policy; or (d) expertise to offer in resolving the issue.

Related policies are those policies of the organisation which may affect or be affected by the policy which may be the outcome of the process. For example, related policies for homework may include those related to student assessment or preparation time for teachers as well, of course, as any Department regulations on homework.

An *issue* exists when the desires, wants and needs are articulated and aggregated to the point where attention is warranted. *Problem definition* follows with the clarification of the issue and the specification of the preferred

outcomes for the organisation. For example, one seeks further information about what it is the various actors want in a policy on homework. Policy alternatives are then generated and reviewed through (a) *clarification studies* — the gathering of information from the operating environment to shed further light on the problem and the alternatives, (b) two-way *communication* with constituents to determine interests and concerns, and (c) *coordination* with related policies to establish how these may affect the implementation of the various alternatives.

The policy alternatives are then *evaluated* according to criteria which may be classified generally as desirability, workability and acceptability. What are the benefits and shortcomings of each alternative? If desirable, is it workable? If both desirable and workable, is it acceptable? Once a policy is formally adopted, it is implemented with a variety of *outcomes* in the operating environment, some intended, some unintended. These outcomes may be the focus of subsequent impact assessment or policy evaluation which may lead, in turn, to refinement, amendment or even abandonment of the policy.

An Integrated Approach

The tasks of policy development, policy implementation and policy evaluation are generally recognised as key components of the policy process. All too frequently, however, they are considered to be discrete and sequential; that is, questions of implementation are only addressed once policy has been formulated while evaluation of policy only becomes a concern during or following implementation. It can, of course, be devastating to announce a policy and then find out that it cannot be implemented and, even if it can be implemented, the effect or impact cannot be determined.

The view is taken here that development, implementation and evaluation are embedded in the policy process in such a way that questions related to all three must be addressed from the outset. Such an 'integrated' approach was suggested in the systematic view illustrated in Figure 4. Questions of desirability, workability and acceptability can only be addressed if one explores in some depth the manner in which each of the policy alternatives might be implemented. Questions related to impact assessment or policy evaluation must also be addressed from the outset if policy makers are interested in the outcomes of their efforts. Policies and their attendant rules and procedures must be phrased in terms which make clear the manner in which outcomes are to be assessed.

The guidelines for policy development, policy implementation and policy evaluation contained in the pages which follow reflect the 'integrated' approach.

Some Guidelines on Roles

It will be evident that a school must develop a policy on policy making before an effective, ongoing policy capability can be established. A policy on policy making or a 'blue print' on policy making or a 'plan' for policy making is a comprehensive statement which sets out the beliefs and conditions under

which policy is to be made. It is a clear pronouncement as to how the policies of the school are to be developed. Such a policy requires regulations and procedures for its implementation in the same manner as policies in general.

It is suggested that the policy process will not be effective unless all concerned understand the roles of the school council, of the principal and staff of the school and of the various interest groups in the school community. Such a policy on policy making will, of course, vary from school to school depending, among other things, on the nature and powers of the school council. The following guidelines are offered.

For the School Council

The school council is likely to be most effective when its energies are focused on issues of policy rather than the operational aspects of school administration although it is inevitable and understandable that some attention will be given to the latter. This is not to suggest that councils make all policies. Of 100 school policies, councils may only have power to make 20. The point is that for these 20, the council should make policy — the broad guidelines — the pattern for action — leaving the principal and staff — the professional educators having the expertise — to be concerned with implementation and operation.

For the Principal in Consultation with Staff

Principals may have responsibility for making policy in most aspects of school operations — the other 80 of the 100 school policies in the illustration above. Where a council has a formal role in policy development the principal should in general have the responsibility, in consultation with staff, for the development of rules and procedures which support that policy. These rules and procedures may, of course, be reviewed by the school council to ensure that they are consistent with policy.

The principal may serve as a policy initiator/orchestrator, a policy analyst/researcher, policy implementer and a policy evaluator. The policy initiator/orchestrator role sees the principal as a leader: the effective principal takes the lead in sensing the need for policy and, based on expertise and experience, proposes alternatives. When necessary, decisive action is taken. The policy analyst/researcher role sees the principal facilitating the input of interest groups, working with members of staff and others to analyse the nature and consequences of the various alternatives and, generally, providing information to the council which may assist in the formulation of policy. The precise nature of the role will, of course vary according to leadership style and situation.

Development, Implementation and Evaluation

This section of the paper provides further suggestions for roles outlined above. These guidelines reflect the 'integrated' approach; that is, that questions of implementation and evaluation must be addressed during the period in which policy is developed.

Development of Policy

In offering guidelines for the development of policy, assume that an issue has emerged; that is, the various desires, wants and needs have been articulated and aggregated to the extent that they constitute a demand for action. For the issue on homework considered earlier, such a demand may arise from parents or from teachers or from the government in response, for example, to a study of homework practices in schools.[19] The following guidelines reflect the key roles of the principal as analyst, researcher and orchestrator:

1. The first task is to identify the actors for the issue under consideration; that is, those individuals or groups with interests or concerns.

2. Consideration should then be given to the manner in which the actors are to be involved in the development of policy. Our democratic traditions and the prevailing political climate have frequently resulted in the view that all should, in some way, be involved at that point at which the alternative for action is determined. A proliferation of committees or meetings may, however, result in a time-consuming or frustrating process as efforts are made to include a large number of persons at every point in the endeavour. In this regard, one observation about current practice is in order. At times, the number of committees and consultations in the decision making process in education appears to be positively mind-numbing. We have apparently established such a practice in response to manifest demands for staff involvement in the decision process. One might ask, however, if a point of decision 'saturation' has not been reached. Some studies in other places appear to confirm this[20] with evidence that many teachers may, in fact, be happier with consultation when appropriate rather than some form of shared decision making. If this be the case, what guidelines might assist in determining an appropriate pattern for participation?

   A selective approach is recommended; one which takes account of the view that the decision process should involve at least four stages: (a) identification and diagnosis of the problem or issue, (b) identification of alternatives, (c) prediction of the consequences of alternatives, and (d) the identification of the best alternative. Two tests should then be employed in deciding who should be involved in each stage; first the *test of expertise* — "does this person have sufficient expertise to contribute to the decision on policy?" and, second, the *test of stake* — "does this person have stake or interest in the outcome of the decision?" Members of a school council will have varying degrees of expertise but all have stake in the outcome. Hoy and Miskel[21] have suggested that involvement may occur at different stages of the decision process in the manner illustrated in Figure 5. Those with a high level of expertise and stake are involved at each stage — some members of council may fall into this category; those with high expertise and low stake are only involved at the stages where expertise can be best brought to bear — identifying alternatives and predicting consequences; those with high stake and low expertise, a group which may include some council members, are involved at the stage where their stake is best

articulated — identifying the best alternative; those with little expertise and stake have little or no involvement. This selective view suggests that a variety of structures may be used in the process of formulating policy, with changing membership according to the criteria set out above. These structures may include the school council or the school staff, *ad hoc* committees or working parties and informal consultations and conversations.

3. The interests and concerns of each actor should then be identified. If not readily known, one of the structures identified above should be adopted. Information may be gathered in a variety of ways through 'clarification studies'; for example, through surveys, site visitations, public meetings, consultations and reviews of literature.

4. Consideration should also be given to the conditions in the environment which may shape the policy to be formulated.

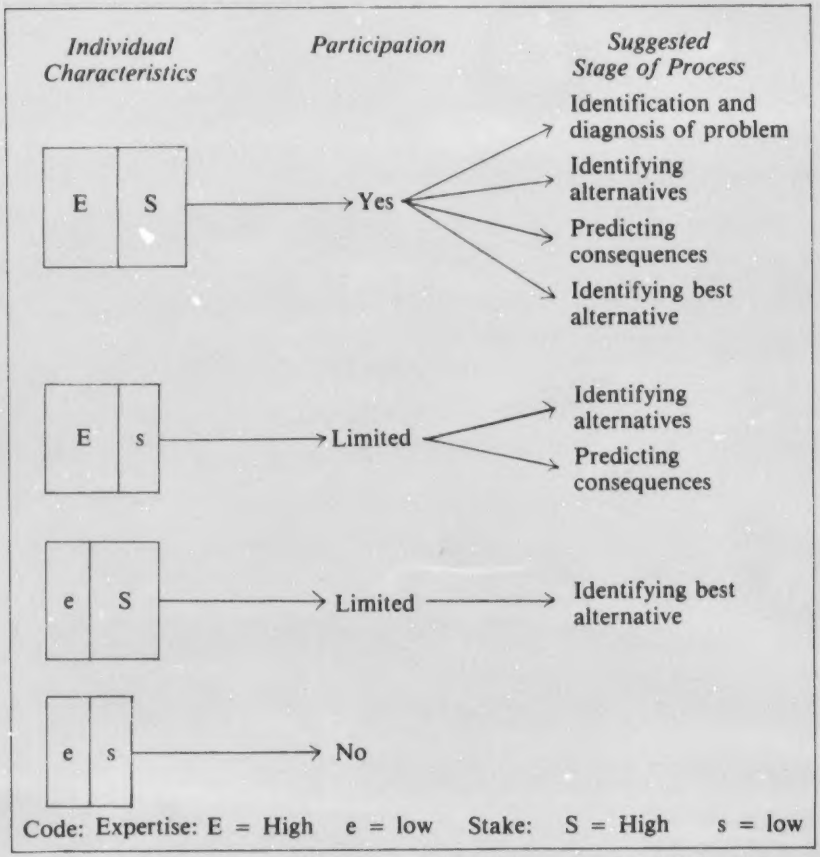

Fig. 5. Alternatives for involvement for different levels of stake and expertise.[21]

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5. Related policies should be examined; these policies may affect or be affected by the policy to be formulated.

Information collected in 1-5 is critical as far as 'problem definition' is concerned. This base of information lays the foundations for the next stage, namely, the identification of policy alternatives.

6. A further guideline is designed to overcome the so-called "problem-to-solution leap" or the "group-think" phenomenon.[22] A "brainstorming" technique is recommended for the identification of policy alternatives. Appropriate for a working party or similar group, alternatives should be generated, initially without criticism. Far-fetched possibilities are encouraged because they may give rise to more practical suggestions. A sifting process should begin once a large list of alternatives has been compiled. Those which constitute regulations or procedures should be discarded. Those which are not mutually exclusive should be grouped together to constitute a cluster of guidelines within a single philosophical framework. The intent is to generate a minimum of two discrete alternatives, each with its own set of guidelines, from which a final selection will be made. Policy makers should feel uncomfortable if only a single course of action emerges at this point.

7. Three criteria should be employed in selecting the 'best' alternative:

   Desirability: What are the potential beliefs? What are the potential negative effects?

   Workability: Factors of cost and competence of staff should be considered here. Will the alternative actually provide the benefits it is designed to provide?

   Acceptability: Is the alternative attractive enough to gain agreement among the contending parties who have a stake in the outcome?

   Educators generally have traditionally focused on the first criterion. Administrators, with responsibility for implementation, are keenly aware of the second. It is suggested, however, that the effective policy maker will give major consideration to the third acknowledging, in the process, the political nature of the policy endeavour.

   Working parties may devise a variety of procedures to take account of the three criteria. Formal rating scales or informal discussion and debate will result in a single, preferred policy alternative which may then be the subject of consideration by the school council. Conflict in discussion or debate is recognised as an inevitable, if not healthy characteristic of the process.

8. Once a preferred alternative has been identified, the process of refinement of a formal policy statement must begin. The checklist in Figure 6 may be useful in such an endeavour.

1. A good school policy is philosophically based and arises from goals which have been adopted for the school. ☐

2. A good school policy is a brief, general statement of a school council's and/or a school staff's beliefs on a certain matter. ☐

3. A good school policy tells *what* is wanted of units or individuals in the school. ☐

4. A good school policy tells *why* certain things are wanted of the units or individuals in the school. ☐

5. A good school policy provides a clear basis for the development and implementation of administrative rules and procedures. ☐

6. A good school policy provides positive direction for administrators, but does not, and should not, prescribe methods for arriving at an end result. ☐

7. A good school policy permits administrators to make interpretations in such a way as to adjust for changing conditions without making any basic changes in policy. ☐

8. A good school policy provides a standard for evaluating performance. ☐

Fig. 6. Characteristics of a good policy statement.

Policy Implementation

Once a policy has been adopted, all of the elements of the administrative process come into play: planning, decision making, organising, communicating, coordinating, influencing and evaluating. For a comprehensive policy, these elements may span most or all of the task areas in school administration: curriculum/instruction, staff personnel, pupil personnel, school-community relations, support services, resource management and operations. It is clearly not possible to give attention to all aspects of implementation in this paper. The intent is to focus on the planning element of the process by examining in detail some of the barriers to effective implementation or, expressed bluntly, by looking at why policies 'fail'.

It was stated at the outset that development, implementation and evaluation are embedded in the policy process in such a way that questions related to all three must be addressed from the outset. Effective implementation is thus rooted in careful planning when the issue emerges, the problem is defined, clarification studies are conducted, and alternatives are generated and assessed for their feasibility. The reasons why policies fail lie as much in poor planning prior to the formulation of policy as they do in subsequent developments. Studies of unsuccessful policy suggest that policies may fail for one or more of the following reasons:[23]

1. The issues which gave rise to the policy were not clearly understood or were poorly defined. The policy which resulted was simply unrelated to the real, underlying issue.

2. The persons involved in the implementation of the policy were not, in general, those who articulated the issues in the first place or those who were involved in the formulation of the policy.

3. The policy itself was substantively weak. Its philosophical basis was unwarranted, its objectives or intended outcomes were unclear and it was vague in regard to the means by which the outcomes were to be achieved. In other words, the problem, the solution and its execution were poorly defined. The anticipated consequences were not expressed in terms which were measurable.

4. An insufficient number of policy alternatives was considered.

5. Questions of feasibility were not addressed adequately.

6. The implementation strategy was deficient in one or more ways: the leadership style was inappropriate; organising, communicating and co-ordinating was inadequate; groups or units required for implementation were poorly structured; resources were insufficient; the process was not controlled or monitored.

7. The weakness in implementation stemmed from the basic issue of administrative responsibility: inattention to specification of responsibility through regulations or rules and lack of direction through procedures resulted in the policy tending to 'slip between the cracks'.

8. Over time, circumstances changed: issues changed, different conditions in the environment emerged, new actors or constituents appeared.

Of particular interest is the fact that the first five reasons are rooted in the process of policy development. Clearly, the seeds of failure may be sown before the formal implementation process begins. If the policy analysis has been thorough, then successful strategies of the kind implied in the fifth and sixth reasons will invariably ensure success.

Policy Evaluation

The need for evaluation is self-evident in times when public support for education is coming under increased scrutiny. Evaluation is clearly required where accountability is demanded or careful choices must be made in the face of limited resources. In any context, however, there are benefits to evaluation:

1. Evaluation can provide information needed for making decisions about policy: to make it work better, to keep it or discard it.

2. Evaluation provides a basis of comparison from which to judge the effectiveness of alternatives.

3. Evaluation focuses the attention of the school community on the work of the school.

4. Evaluation is a useful response in times of controversy. Information may settle or clarify disputes among persons having disparate views on the utility of a policy.

5. Evaluation discourages the adoption of fads. A school which encourages evaluation reduces the chances that effective policies will be discarded when attractive, but untested alternatives are proposed.

Consistent with the 'integrated' approach suggested earlier, provision should be made for evaluation on each occasion policy is made, a task made easier if the school has adopted a policy on policy evaluation which acknowledges the value of evaluation. Rules and procedures should also be prepared.

Some useful guidelines for installing an ongoing evaluation capability are as follows:

1. The evaluation function must be an integral part of the work of senior staff. In addition, personnel at all levels of the school should be involved in the process. A decentralised 'self-evaluation' capability should be instituted whenever possible.
2. There must be clear linkage between the evaluation function and that of policy development as far as staff are concerned. Procedures should specify clearly how the findings of an evaluation will be utilised in amending or instituting new policy, regulations and procedures.

3. Evaluation should be a continuous process rather than one which is activated in times of crisis or only when demanded by senior administrators.

4. Policy makers must be prepared to allocate adequate time and funds to the evaluation function.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine in detail the process of policy evaluation. The knowledge and skills of evaluation in this context are the same or similar to those associated with evaluation in general or school-based evaluation in particular. Attention is given, however, to one aspect of the process which should be addressed during the process of policy development, in keeping with the 'integrated' approach which has been recommended throughout; this aspect concerns the selection of 'indicators'.

In the context of policy, an indicator may be defined as a condition, behaviour or outcome, the existence of which may be considered evidence that a policy is achieving or has achieved its purpose. To illustrate, consider a policy related to buildings and grounds security. The key control system which the policy demands is presumably for the purpose of minimising thefts and damage. How does one monitor or assess whether such a policy is effective? A

number of indicators may be established including, for example, the number of thefts per month in areas of the school or the dollar cost of repairs to facilities covered by the key control system. The following guidelines are offered for the selection of indicators:

1. Agreement on indicators should be reached during the policy development process. Essentially, this will involve answering the question "What conditions, behaviours or outcomes will we accept as evidence that this policy has had or is having the effect desired?" If this question cannot be answered then the policy is in evident need of revision.

2. The indicators should be capable of measurement. Most indicators will fall in the categories of quantity, quality, time and cost.

3. The cost of identifying and measuring should not exceed the value of the information obtained.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to provide a framework within which school councils may work in the development and updating of school policy and improving the policy making process. A debate about the merits of school councils was not included; instead, the assumption was made that councils have a valuable and powerful role to play and that a policy perspective and a policy framework have much to offer in achieving this end.

It is acknowledged that the degree of sophistication which full implementation of the guidelines will entail may take years to evolve. Furthermore, this writer supports the contention[24] that councils will only fulfill their potential when their role in the allocation of resources is expanded. But even partial implementation of the approach offered herein will be worth the effort for those dedicated to achieving the benefits of community involvement in education.

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Technological Prevailing knowledge, equipment and practice in the area under consideration.
Legal-Governmental Statutes and regulations of government, including the policies of the Education Department, together with that body of civil and criminal law which may apply to the issue.
Economic The state of the economy at all levels — federal, state and local.
Ecological-demographic Conditions related to people and organisations of people which may affect the school; included here might be enrolment trends, and practices in other schools and institutions.
Socio-cultural The values and norms which prevail in the community of the school.
Political The positions which might be taken by the various individuals and groups with an interest in the issue.

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"MORE COOKS WOULD IMPROVE THE BROTH"
ADMINISTRATIVE STYLES, THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

MARGARET BEARLIN

Introduction

One of the most extraordinary, if not scandalous, features of the recently published *Report of the National Inquiry into Teacher Education*[1] (1980) was its almost complete failure to take into account the fact that both the majority of teachers and teacher education students were women and that a veritable mountain of reports[2] since 1973 had documented the substantial discrimination suffered by both women and girls in education institutions in this country. Given that its mandate was to recommend "changes which might assist in achieving improved teaching and learning in Australian schools"[3] this omission is even more difficult to comprehend.

This paper is the only one being presented at this conference which is specifically related to women, though I hope, unlike the N.I.T.E. Report, not the only one which takes into account the fact that education policy affects both females and males, and, since the situation has, if anything, changed for the worse since the reports mentioned were published, that education policy, in general, operates to the systematic and continuing disadvantage of females.

Who makes education policy? Clearly, in Australia, *not* women. This paper arises out of concern:

1. at the imbalance of women and men in decision-making positions in education systems and the effect of this on the quality or wisdom of the decisions made;

2. at the manner of operation of institutions, i.e. administrative structures or styles, which are such that they do not seem to encourage, enable or require fuller participation of women in decision-making.

Aim of Paper

My aim in this paper is to establish reasons why women do not participate more fully in educational institutions and hence in education policy making, and the implications of this for the quality of education, and hence life, in this society.

I will direct my argument mainly to teacher education and show how institutions with hierarchical and competitive structures reinforce rather than break the self perpetuating cycle of low self-esteem and aspiration in women. I will argue that if this cycle is to be broken and women are to participate equally with men in decision making in educational institutions, the administrative structures of these institutions must be changed to embody

values with which women can identify. Such changes while being more just and respectful of women will also affect positively the quality of teacher education for both men and women.

The paper is partly empirically based and partly analytical. I will, in the first part, draw heavily on the various reports on women and girls in education, and in the second, assess the possible effectiveness of the recommendations of these reports in the light of the conditions necessary for competent decision-making. In the third part I will look at the implications of this assessment for the administrative styles of educational institutions.

Assumptions

The principles of social equality, freedom, respect for the individual as well as concern for the interests of the whole society are strongly professed in this society. Sex discrimination in educational institutions, as in society, has been shown to violate all these principles. In this paper I am assuming:

(i) that women and men have the same human rights, irrespective of age, ethnicity, marital status, social class or any other factor, and that includes the right to paid employment;

(ii) that women and men are fundamentally similar in their intellectual and other capacities, that within-sex differences are considerably greater than between-sex differences;

(iii) that differences between women and men as groups are not primarily biologically determined, but are environmentally or socially determined and have to be explained in these terms. This means that skills and other abilities are most strongly influenced by environmental factors and by the effort of the individual and also by how the individual views her/himself, e.g. this means that if there are considerable differences in levels of self-esteem between women and men, as there are, sociological and psychological reasons rather than biological ones have to be given to explain them;

(iv) that one important socially determined difference between women and men is their tendency to hold different sets of social values: women, as distinct from men, value affiliation more than individual achievement, and co-operation more than competition;[4]

(v) that knowledge is socially constructed and hence is not value or theory-free, and that the knowledge or construction of reality with most influence will be that of the socially and politically dominant groups, and that the values/assumptions/beliefs of that group will be reflected in their way of naming the world. I am assuming that the dominant groups in Australia are white, middle class, anglo-celtic, males, and hence given (i) to (v) above;

(vi) that a good society, or a good educational institution, is one in which women and men share equally in decision-making and in the exercise of

power. Unless women do share equally with men in this way, not only is it unjust and talent wasted, but, most seriously, the quality of administration and of the institution suffers because the whole range of human values is not expressed in the institution. The fullest participation of women in policy making is, I believe, of over-riding importance at this time of increasing violence, increasing disregard of human values and human rights, and increasing threat of nuclear holocaust.

The position of women in educational institutions

What do the reports on women and girls in education, published since 1973, tell us? The reports indicate that:

1. women are seriously under-represented at policy making levels in all educational institutions;

2. this has serious implications for the quality of education and for both women and men, not the least being that the administrative structures in educational institutions reinforce sex-role stereotypes and hence the self-perpetuating cycle of low self-esteem in women;

3. this occurs because *systems* operate in ways which discriminate overtly and covertly against women. (The reports give the name "systemic discrimination" to covert discrimination which has been institutionalized.)

4. steps can be taken to reduce the effect of both overt and systemic discrimination through the systematic modification of administrative structures and the introduction of new courses and of consciousness raising strategies.

1. UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AT POLICY MAKING LEVELS

There is serious imbalance of women and men at different levels in educational institutions in all states of Australia.

(i) Women predominate as teachers in the teaching service (in 1979, 57% of all teachers in Australia were female: 68% of primary, 98% of early childhood and 42% of all secondary teachers were female[5]) and as students in teacher education.[6]

(ii) Women are under-represented, and at higher levels are unrepresented, in positions of authority and decision-making in all parts of the education system — in schools, teacher education and tertiary institutions, and in State Education Departments. For example,[7] in South Australia in 1977 women made up 58% of the teaching profession but held only 23% of the promotion positions. In the primary area women held 68% of all teaching positions, but only 13% of all promotion positions. Only 2% of all women teaching in primary schools were in a promotion position.[8] For further examples, see references 9 to 11.

(iii) Men predominate at all levels of decision-making and especially at the levels of greatest power. In 1976 in Victoria no woman held any of the top 64 positions in the Education Department or teaching service.[12] In 1977 in the South Australian Education Department women made up only 14% of the administrative staff, occupying positions often without direct power and responsibility. No women held positions in the Director-General's Secretariat or in the Directorates of Administration and Finance, and Educational Facilities.[13] In 1977 the South Australian Board of Advanced Education had 15 members, all male.[14]

(iv) Women teachers in schools and CAEs are still less qualified than men teachers.[15]

(v) The proportion of women teachers in untenured positions in tertiary institutions is much higher than that of men. The vulnerability of women to retrenchment and the consequent educational implications are graphically illustrated in the following example. In 1981 in the six Melbourne metropolitan teacher education institutions proposed for amalgamation by the Tertiary Education Commission, women made up 31% of the total academic staff for the six colleges combined. Of these staff members 47% of the women (approximately 1 in 2) and 17% of the men (approximately 1 in 6) held untenured positions.[16] Staff cuts due to amalgamations will involve a loss of approximately 200 contract staff and will reduce the proportion of women staff to less than 19% of the total, a loss of between one-third and one-half of all women teacher education staff in these Colleges.[17]

(vi) The proportion of women in promotion positions in schools and tertiary institutions is not increasing in any significant way; rather, in many areas it is decreasing. In the Victorian Education Department since the provisions guaranteeing senior women representation at top level in large primary schools was abolished in 1972, the percentage of women principals has been falling. In 1976, 29.8% of Principal and Primary Special Classes positions were held by women; in 1978 the proportion had fallen to 27.4%. It should be noted that in 1862 women held 20% of principal positions.[18] As well, both the number and proportion of women in university and CAE teaching positions are falling.[19] The amalgamation of CAEs, especially in Victoria, as seen above, threatens to reduce dramatically the number and proportion of women teaching in the teacher education sector.

2. IMPLICATIONS AND EFFECTS

The evidence that there is a serious imbalance of women, compared with men, holding and applying for senior positions in educational institutions is overwhelming. And this imbalance, it must be stressed, occurs in spite of the fact that the teaching profession, together with nursing, has attracted in the present and past the majority of the highest qualified and brightest women in Australia;[20] and in spite of formal obstacles to the appointment of women to such positions having been removed.[21] This situation, of under-representation

of women at senior levels in educational institutions, and increasing under-representation also at junior levels of tertiary institutions, can be seen, the Reports state, as unjust on many counts in a society professing equality of opportunity.[22] It is clearly wasteful of the talent of some of the most able women in our society,[23] and almost certainly has a deleterious effect on the interest of women and girls.[24] In the words of the Victorian Report ". . . by limiting the contributions of women . . . our children and the whole system of education are the poorer".[25]

It is also seen as failing to provide adequate models[26] of women in positions of authority, thus reinforcing outdated sex-role stereotypes in schools,[27] tertiary institutions and education departments[28] with consequent detrimental effects on students' perceptions of women and on girls' perceptions of themselves. Both boys and girls become accustomed to the idea that females occupy subordinate positions.[29] To the extent that girls see women in this way and model themselves on their women teachers, girls both limit themselves while at school and perpetuate the cycle of low aspiration in women. Part of this cycle of low aspiration could be the decision by so many girls to become teachers themselves.[30]

There are detrimental effects also on the self esteem and aspirations of women in the teaching service who are shown to be more willing to apply for sex-specific promotion positions than for those in which they would be competing with men,[31] and, by extrapolation, on the self-esteem of women students and staff in teacher education institutions.[32]

3. SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

Given that formal or legal obstacles to women applying for tenure or promotion have been removed, why are women in such positions in educational institutions? In attempting to answer this question there are at least two possible approaches: one which implicitly blames the victim, the other which blames the system.

It is important for the purposes of this paper to distinguish these approaches and the assumption on which they are based in order later to be able to analyse the likely effectiveness of proposals aimed at affecting the degree of participation of women in educational decision-making.

The Concept of Systemic Discrimination

The reports, in particular the 1973 and 1978 South Australian Reports, use a system-blaming model in their analysis and give the name "systemic discrimination" to that aspect of the operation of institutions or systems that results in discrimination against, or disadvantage for, a particular social group. Systemic discrimination is the result of overt and covert discrimination becoming institutionalized, and is another way of describing part of the hidden curricula of institutions.

The non-participation of women in policy making in educational institutions is seen as the direct result of the way these institutions operate: the

way decisions are made (including who will be the decision-makers) and the criteria on which decisions are based. The institutional rules and procedures discriminate against women, in particular women following traditional female life patterns, and in favour of men because they assume as the norm the traditional male life pattern. These rules discriminate in ways that are unrelated to and often run counter to the stated purposes of the institution.

The Occurrence and Effects of Systemic Discrimination

(i) Systemic discrimination occurs when rules or criteria for recruitment, selection or promotion are not directly related to the requirements of the particular job[33] and when personnel practices operate upon assumptions about the male working life without consideration for female life patterns.[34] Systemic discrimination against women also exists when promotion systems stress seniority, continuity of service, length of service, satisfactory service at a lower level or country service,[35] when routine organisation in institutions, e.g. timing of meetings, etc. is built on a 'traditional male' model which presupposes a 'traditional wife' who shops, cooks, cares for children etc,[36] when courses for upgrading or gaining qualification are scheduled at times unsuitable for those with family responsibilities,[37] when there is inadequate provision of childcare.[38]

(ii) The most serious effect of systemic discrimination and the hidden curriculum in educational institutions is the reinforcing of the self perpetuating cycle of low self-esteem and low aspiration in women. The following structures, values and attitudes in educational institutions, the reports claim, reinforce this cycle: hierarchical, competitive, male-dominated structures;[39] male-dominated promotion and selection committees;[40] the major decisions about teacher education courses being made by males;[41] the absence of clearly defined roles for women,[42] the only senior positions held by women being sex-specific ones, i.e. where they do not compete with men;[43] the sex-role stereotyping of subject areas and levels of teaching;[44] women being paid less and being promoted less frequently than men with similar qualifications;[45] unconsciously communicated attitudes to and expectations for women and men which mirror dominant social attitudes to women's roles, e.g. men *must* and women *may* have a career.[46]

4. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

Recommendations aimed at reducing or eliminating systemic discrimination stress the need for a public commitment by the administrators and principals of institutions to the principle of real equality of opportunity in employment,[47] and a thorough and searching analysis of the criteria, written and unwritten, of recruitment, selection and promotion.[48]

Specific recommendations fall into two categories; those relating to (i) discrimination against women as females; and (ii) discrimination against women with traditional female life patterns. Discrimination against women *as females* is to be reduced by using non-sexist or inclusive language,[49] and by

including a reasonable balance of men and women on appointment panels.[50] Discrimination against women with *traditional life patterns* is to be countered by:

- modifications to working conditions, school organization and staffing e.g. more flexibility in timetabling and in the granting of emergency leave for both men and women to care for sick dependents, the establishment of creches at schools for children of teachers, the appointment of executive assistants who would reduce workloads of senior administrators, in order to make such positions possible options for women/people who have primary responsibility for running the home.[51]
- special provisions (a) to meet the study and qualification needs of women e.g. priority in awarding release time scholarships to teachers without adequate qualifications,[52] preference to women who apply for courses in educational administration,[53] designing of programs specifically for women needing to upgrade teaching qualifications or who are seeking senior teaching or administrative positions;[54] (b) to meet the effects of career interruption on women,[55] e.g. more generous provision of family leave, and of retraining programmes; and (c) to meet the effect of contraction in educational institutions.[56]

Recommendations in the reports also emphasize the importance of raising the consciousness of staff (in secondary and tertiary institutions) with respect to the effect on students of sex bias in curricula and of sexist language;[57] introducing courses of study of men and women in society,[58] in human relationships,[59] and in women's studies.[60] These are seen as crucial if women are to gain a more realistic understanding of their contribution to society and are to come to believe they are competent to participate in its development. Such courses, it is claimed, will also raise the awareness of staff and students with respect to the operation of systemic discrimination in educational institutions.

Critique of the Recommendations in the Reports

Recent reports on sexism in education have provided extensive documentation of systemic discrimination against women in educational institutions (including teacher education institutions), have shown that this discrimination reflects traditional societal attitudes and values and is deeply embedded, and recommended ways of reducing or eliminating such discrimination. But how effective will these recommendations be in eliminating systemic discrimination against women in educational institutions?

The main purpose of this paper is to examine this question, i.e. to examine the extent to which implementing the recommendations of these reports will modify the effects of such systemic discrimination, in particular to determine how effective such recommendations can be in

(a) breaking the cycle of low self-esteem in women; and

(b) making it possible for women, particularly women with traditional life patterns, to participate equally with men in policy making in teacher education institutions.

My contention is that the recommendations will be limited in their effectiveness because the analytic framework on which they are based is itself limited. The "system-blaming" model implicit in the recommendations has greater explanatory power than a "victim-blaming" one which assumes that structures are politically, in this case, gender neutral, but it does not go far enough. The "system-blaming" extends only to surface structures and the changes proposed do not alter the fundamental structures of the institutions. A more refined and epistemologically radical analysis of the conditions necessary for participation in competent educational decision-making is needed if we are to know how to create structures which do not discriminate against women.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

It can be argued that if any persons, in this case women, are to be able to participate competently in decision-making, in this case education policy making, they must have the relevant knowledge or competence; self-confidence or belief in themselves as competent; the desire to participate; and there must be no constraints, legal, psychological, sociological etc, preventing their participation.[61] If these four conditions are accepted as both necessary and sufficient, an analysis of the recommendations in the light of these conditions will indicate the adequacy or likely effectiveness of the recommendations in reducing or eliminating systemic discrimination.

Using this procedure it will be shown that the recommendations proposed are only partly adequate for the task, that they deal in some detail with practical or other constraints preventing women from participating as fully as men in educational institutions; and they affect in a positive, but limited, way the development of competence and self-confidence in women. However, they do not deal adequately with the reluctance of women to apply for senior positions in educational institutions. It will be argued that the recommendations tend to misconstrue this central question of motivation, by locating the source of the problem in women's attitudes rather than in the structures and values of the institutions themselves.

APPLYING THE FRAMEWORK

Removal of Constraints which Prevent Participation

Most of the recommendations (see 4. above) relate to possible overt discrimination against women with traditional female life patterns, primary family responsibilities etc. They are directed at removing constraints of various kinds, either practical or psychological. Recommendations such as flexible timetabling, provision of child-care facilities, emergency leave and family leave for males and females, reduction of top administrative workloads are directed at removing practical constraints. They make it more possible for women to undertake teaching and administrative jobs on a more equal footing with men. They also give implicit support and approval to childrearing as an acceptable activity for both men and women and could help to remove psychological constraints e.g. guilt in mothers who wish to continue their careers but not at the cost of neglecting their families, and raising self-esteem of mothers since more respect is being paid to their traditional activity of child-rearing. They also enlarge the options for men and in a humanising way e.g., by making fulltime childrearing a possibility even if for a limited period.

Removal of such constraints on participation by women is important and necessary but alone is not sufficient to make participation possible. The other three positive conditions: knowledge; self-confidence and desire to participate are essential and much more difficult to achieve especially when it is seen that these conditions are interdependent.

Knowledge and Experience Necessary for Participation in Educational Decision Making

People are given entry to a profession and status within it, on the grounds that they possess appropriate knowledge and experience. Thus those who define the knowledge and experience required to enter and rise in a profession have the most power and likely advantage. Education systems are controlled by men and can be seen to advantage men and disadvantage women for precisely this reason.[62]

Academic knowledge and formal teaching and administrative experience are defined, by men in positions of power, as relevant and certifiable for entry to and promotion within the education system. These forms of knowledge and experience are both more accessible to males and more continuous with male life experience, i.e. *certifiable experience is based on male norms.* On the other hand, understanding of and experience in, child rearing, personal relationships, and household or family administration are given little or no official recognition, accorded little or no official value. These are both more accessible to females and more continuous with female experience. They are, it can be argued, as relevant as academic qualifications and formal experience to acquiring expertise in education.[63]

The general recommendation urging an "analysis of the criteria", written and unwritten, of recruitment, selection and promotion[64] is of central relevance. Consideration should be given, in this context, to regarding full-time childrearing as legitimate experience for a teacher, female or male, which would count with classroom experience toward promotion in the present system.[65] Recommendations giving priority in granting release-time scholarships to teachers without adequate qualifications and to women teachers in particular are relevant here. They assist women disadvantaged by interruption to their career by childrearing[66] to gain access to credentialed knowledge.

Women are further and more seriously disadvantaged in that formal academic courses are largely designed and taught by men, purveying knowledge that has been created almost entirely by men, in the fields of psychology, sociology, history, philosophy, curriculum development etc.[67] *i.e. certified knowledge is man-made.* Such academic studies have in the past typically omitted reference to the achievements, activities and experience of women and use language which itself ignores, dismisses and often denigrates women,[68] and which does not name the world in terms with which women can most easily identify.[69] It would be surprising if such courses of study served to raise the self-esteem of women.[70]

Courses of study of men and women in society, in human relationships as recommended in the Victorian Report[71] and especially women's studies

courses,[72] are crucial in teacher education programs if women are to gain a more realistic understanding of their contribution to society and come to believe they are competent to participate in its development. The importance of raising the consciousness of staff to the effects on students of sex bias in curricula, and of sexist language, as recommended in NSW Report,[73] becomes evident, as does ensuring a balance of males and females on course planning committees.[74] The problems in this area are enormous, relating as they do to bodies of knowledge, dominant language styles and to the basic structures of power in the society. The recommendations cited, although somewhat general, do begin to address the problem. However, because of the bias of generally all-male[75] selection panels, women are still disadvantaged in selection and promotion even when they have the same (or superior) credentialed knowledge and experience as men. The S.A. recommendation[76] that all selection panels should include both men and women is an attempt to overcome this problem.

Belief in Oneself as Competent

Knowledge and self esteem: As has already been noted, sex bias in knowledge and language operates to diminish the self esteem of women. Women who are unable to study women's studies courses, or to have access to courses or activities with similar objectives, because they are not offered in certain institutions, will be less likely to change their view of themselves as incompetent to act upon the world.[77] In this way the (sexist) values of an institution can be reflected in the balance of courses offered and directly or indirectly affect the self esteem of its women students. The importance of women's studies courses, developed by women and for women, should not be underestimated if we are to raise the consciousness and self esteem of women. Women's studies courses for women (as black studies courses for blacks) could be investigated in this context.[78]

Self-esteem and institutional values: Teacher education institutions, like almost all educational institutions, are generally hierarchical and semi-authoritarian in structure, competitive, and stress upward mobility.

Women, as a social group, learn or are taught, traditionally, in common with other less powerful social groups to value affiliation or relationship with others more than individual achievement; cooperation and sharing, more than competition; and to serve others rather than desire power over them.[79] Their socialisation does not equip them to compete as well as normally socialized men in typically bureaucratic institutions.[80] In a non-democratic structure they tend to see themselves as incompetent even if their formal qualifications are more than adequate, because they do not know the political rules. Even when they do, their socialisation and the negative response of some of their male colleagues can inhibit the "assertiveness" necessary to climb or rise in the system, i.e., assuming they aspire to do so.[81]

The low self-confidence or self-esteem of women has been mentioned many times in the reports. In *Girls, School and Society,* it was given special prominence and many recommendations relating to it have been made. These have focused on the elimination of sex bias in the overt and hidden curriculum, in language, in teacher expectations, and on the need for women as models in

positions of authority, for women's studies courses as already mentioned, etc. There has however been little direct attention paid to the values implicit and explicit in the power structures of educational institutions and their effect on, e.g., 'the hidden curriculum', beyond drawing attention to the domination of these structures by males.[82]

If it is the case that there is tension of a fundamental kind between what most women value and the values implicit in the administrative structures of teacher education institutions; and, that this affects women in a destructive way, e.g., by reinforcing their low self esteem and low aspiration; then, this will be a matter of central concern to those whose responsibility it is to identify the factors that affect the quality of teacher education, not just for women, but for all students. For it will directly affect the range of goals that can be achieved.

Willingness to Participate

If the above thesis is correct it also helps to explain why women are reluctant to apply for promotion positions in education. If many women do find the values implicit in the structures of teacher education institutions alien to them even though they are qualified and experienced, it is unlikely that they will want to participate as fully in the competition for seniority and power as their male colleagues who hold different values. This could be the crux of the problem concerning the place of women in educational institutions, and deserves further exploration. Rather than identifying women's attitudes, e.g., their reluctance to apply for promotion poistions, as the focus for attention, I believe the problem lies in the structure and values of the institutions themselves, and recommendations for change should begin there.

THE REPORTS AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

How adequate to the task then of eliminating systemic discrimination are the recommendations in these reports?

Most, but not all, of the recommendations aim at removing practical constraints on women combining family responsibilities and a career in education. These measures are an essential first step in equalising opportunity for women in educational institutions. By raising the status of childrearing they also have a potentially humanising effect on the institutions.[83] The removal of constraints, then, is an essential and humanizing step.

However, recommendations aimed at removing constraints on women's participation in the education system seem to have as their object elimination of handicaps that prevent women from competing on the same basis as men for promotion positions. There are no suggestions that the fundamental structures of power and status in institutions should be changed. What is being made possible, it seems, is a fairer competition for women within the given institutions. The assumptions implicit in these recommendations then are:

(i) that if legal and practical barriers are removed women will be able to compete with men in the present institutions;

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(ii) that if these barriers are removed women will be willing to compete with men in the present institutions;

(iii) that women will change their self-esteem and career aspirations by being exposed to female authority figures in the system; and

(iv) that it is women's attitudes rather than the fundamental structures of the institutions that need to be changed.

All four assumptions are questionable. There is not sufficient evidence to support the first three[44] and the analysis in the preceding section suggests that the fourth is indeed open to question. The major factors, this analysis suggests, underlying women's reluctance to participate at senior levels of educational institutions, are the sexist structures and values of the institutions themselves.[45]

These values discourage women from wanting to apply for senior positions by reinforcing their feelings of incompetence. These values are reflected in the structure, content and language of courses which, through the knowledge they purvey, affect (negatively) the self esteem of students. These values are fundamentally alien to those which women, as members of a subordinate group, have been taught to accept and respect for themselves as a basis for their action. They are also values that are incompatible with the fundamental social principles of a liberal democracy, and especially the principles of equality and respect for persons.

Implications for Educational Institutions and Administrative Styles

It has been argued that women will never "succeed" in large numbers in (teacher) education institutions and will not participate equally with men in decision making unless the administrative structures and values of these institutions are substantially changed by (a) removing the structures that overtly and covertly discriminate against them; and (b) introducing structures with which they can identify and which enable them to respect themselves as persons.

Women will come to value themselves more highly, in a public and group sense as distinct from a private and individual sense, when what they hold to be important is valued publicly.[46] Only then will they feel themselves taken seriously as persons in their own right.[47]

There is a problem here which it is important to identify. Women, in common with other powerless social groups, belong, in Paolo Freire's words, to the "culture of silence". They are not accustomed to the public valuing of those things most important to them e.g., serving and caring for others, especially children; acknowledgement of ordinary human feelings, such as fear of failure. They have to learn that they have the ability to name and so to value publicly their 'own world'. This is why the writing of women into history, psychology, sociology, etc. is so important, also the use of non-sexist language and the development of courses which are continuous with women's experience.

The question then becomes: is it possible to modify the administrative structures and values of teacher education institutions in harmony with the above objectives (1 above)"? Is it possible to make them:

- less competitive and more cooperative?
- no less concerned with the quality of individual achievement, but more concerned with the quality of relationships between people?
- no less concerned with mathematical literacy, but more concerned with emotional literacy in both women and men?
- less hierarchical and authoritarian, more genuinely democratic and open?
- more able to be sensitive to the feelings of those with low self-esteem and who undervalue their accomplishments?
- more valuing of childrearing in reality, not just in rhetoric?

In summary, eliminating discrimination against women and enabling them to participate equally with men in teacher education institutions will involve:

- changing the administrative structures, of authority and power in particular;
- changing the language and content and the manner of planning and teaching of courses;
- changing the manner of selection and promotion of staff and the criteria used in these procedures;
- introducing practical support systems for students and staff, e.g., full day professional child care, and family and emergency leave provisions for staff.

Such changes would raise the quality of teacher education through:

- enlarging the participation of women, and members of other low self esteem groups, in the cultural and academic life of the institution;
- extending and enriching the options for both men and women, staff and students, beyond the stereotypes;
- humanising the institution, e.g., by more just and empathetic treatment of staff and students, for instance, by raising the status of courses in human relationships;
- making possible higher standards of achievement because of raised self-esteem in students and staff; and

- providing a more effective education for teachers who would be able to reproduce in schools, for children, the enlarging and humanistic conditions of learning they have experienced, so breaking stereotypes and structures of discrimination that limit children's educational achievements and life options.

Conclusion

This paper has drawn attention to the evidence in recent reports of the magnitude and complexity of covert or systemic discrimination, related to sex, in educational institutions. It has shown how institutions with hierarchical and competitive structures reinforce rather than break the self-perpetuating cycle of low self-esteem and aspiration in women. It has argued that if this cycle is to be broken and women are to participate equally with men in decision making in educational institutions, the administrative structures of these institutions must be changed to embody values with which women can identify. It has shown that such changes, while being more just and respectful of women, will affect positively the quality of teacher education for both men and women.

The danger is, if these recommendations for changes in administrative structures are not implemented, that women will gradually be co-opted into the hierarchical, competitive system. They will gradually become indistinguishable from the men who created the system with consequent loss to society of their (female) traditional humanising influence.

Jean Baker Miller[9] has argued very persuasively, that in an age of increasing technology and increasing alienation, we should publicly acknowledge the strength and importance of the contribution women make to the maintenance of community and caring and we allow, at our peril, this type of activity to diminish. The peril Miller has in mind is the social disintegration of western capitalist society. But even more prophetic voices come to us from the radical feminist position. Birgit Brock-Utne,[9] of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, writes of the role of mothers in the education of young people for peace, mutual understanding and respect for human rights, in the context of a civilization facing nuclear annihilation. She sees the root of the problem in the patriarchical society. She explores the sociological and psychological links between patriarchy, sexism, violence and war, and asks how can women domesticated by the patriarchical system become educators for peace and human rights?

As long as patriarchy exists as Nietzsche said, men will be trained for war and women for the re-creation of warriors. In a patriarchal society, she says, men have placed themselves at the top of a hierarchy, with women and children at the bottom. Women are exploited, victimized, oppressed, even mutilated and physically abused so that they learn "their proper place" and who their masters are. Their proper place is not in government nor in leading positions in the media or business, but found in doing unpaid household chores or taking care of children. "And children," she says "are to be brought up to reproduce the patriarchal society."

What else, she asks, can mothers do, when they themselves are part of this society, often so oppressed that they have internalized the value system and beliefs of the oppressor concerning their own worth. She asks in the context of education for peace, mutual understanding and human rights:

- How is it possible for a mother to teach her daughter that she has as much value as her brother — when the mother herself does not believe so, and has much less value than her husband?

- How is it possible for her to teach her daughter to stand up for her rights, to be self-assertive, to change the world — when she is so oppressed herself that she is unable to envisage any other world?

- And how is it possible for a mother to let her son grow up in a non-competitive way — when she believes men must be trained to become winners?

- How is it possible for her to let her little son be weak and allow him to cry and show emotions — when she believes men have to be strong and tough.

She argues that, "if women are to help men prevent war they have to be liberated themselves, and accordingly, also have to fight for their own liberation. Not for equality on men's premises, but for liberation from capitalistic (both private and state) and patriarchal structures."

Similarly we can ask how can we educate Australian children for peace, mutual understanding and respect for human rights when the administrative structures and styles of our schools and educational institutions reinforce sexist values, values which are inextricably linked to violence and war.

Men have said that "too many cooks spoil the broth." Women, who have worked together caring for and feeding their families for millennia know that is not true. Perhaps we have reached a time in human history where only those who can cook together sharing resources and ideas with mutual trust and respect should be considered fit to do so. Not only will more cooks improve the broth — unless we do have more cooks, in every sense, we will have no broth.

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3. *NITE Report*, p.xxi.

4. This is a general statement and does not apply to individual cases.

5. *NITE Report*. para. 8.59.

6. Anderson, D.S. *et al.*, *Students in Australian Higher Education: A Study in their Social Composition since the Abolition of Fees*. Tertiary Education Centre, University of New South Wales, 1978.

7. Examples can be given from every sector in every scale. However there is room in a paper of this length for only a representative sample. For further data see either the reports listed in (2) above or the NITE submission on which this paper is based.

8. *Inequality of Opportunity*, pp.13, 14.

9. *Women in Education in the A.C.T.*, p.20.

10. *ibid.*, p.8.

11. *G.S.S.*, para. 8.14.

12. *Vic. Report*, p.22. There are 13 women in the top 176 positions, and 290 women among the top 1,140 positions. As the total teaching service is 55% female, the absence of women in positions of policy and decision-making is clearly inequitable.

13. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p. 17.

14. *ibid.*, p.21.

15. *ibid.*, p.24.

16. Similarly 47% of women compared with 18% of men held tenured positions in Victorian Universities in 1976. (*Vic. Report*, p.22.)

17. Hamel-Green, Michael, "College Amalgamations, will women be the first casualties?" *CASA Survey of Staffing in Amalgamating CAEs.* July 1981 (unpub.)

18. Ansell, J. "Some Aspects of Sex Discrimination in Employment Opportunities", July 1975 (unpub.), quoted in Deborah Towns, "Equality of Opportunity for Women Teachers" in *Second Women and Labour Conference Papers*, Vol 2, 1980, p.639.

19. (a) At university level in Victoria, despite changes such as higher levels of education, maternity leave and greater accessibility, women in 1971 were not as involved proportionally in university teaching as they were in 1911 and 1912. (Keeves and Read (1974) quoted in *Vic. Report*, p.23.)
(b) "the number of women in status positions in Colleges and on College staffs as a whole has fallen during the last twenty years." *NSW Report*, p.48.

20. Females enter training with higher HSC scores than males. Of all students entering Melbourne State College in 1976, average HSC scores for males was 274, and females 281. *Vic. Report*, p.138.

21. "For example in South Australia since 1958 women teachers have acquired the *appearance* of equality of opportunity. Changes include: equal pay; accouchement leave; married women teachers gained right to permanency and hence access to promotion (1972), extension of benefits — release-time scholarships etc — to all employees, male or female, married or single . . . Yet the assumption that women have benefited substantially from the removal of structural barriers is certainly not true."
In 1968, 6% of *all* women in the teaching profession held promotion positions and 31% of *all* men. In 1977, 8% of *all* women in the teaching profession held promotion positions and *36%* of all men. Between 1968 and 1977 men in promotion positions experienced 5% growth, women 2% growth. *Inequality of Opportunity*, pp.8, 13, 14.

22. *Vic. Report*, p.144. See also "The Arguments for Equal Opportunity" in *Inequality of Opportunity*, Appendix I, p.7.

23. "A wastage of ability has occurred and continues to occur as a result of discrimination." *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.7. Also *Women in Education*, pp.2, 4.

24. "The absence of women from policy-making in education does not necessarily mean that particular aspects of a problem affecting them will not be taken into account, nor does their presence guarantee that they will be. It is likely, however, that the inclusion of additional viewpoints will improve the policy-making and implementation processes." *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.7.

25. *Vic. Report*, p.144.

26. See "Role Models" in *Inequality of Opportunity*, pp.29-35.

27. *G.S.S.*, para. 8.12; *Vic. Report*, p.138.

28. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.7.

29. *G.S.S.*, para. 8.17; *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.7; see also "A study of sex-role attitudes of students in male principal and female principal high schools in Victoria", Research undertaken for *Vic. Report*, Appendix II, p.i.

30. *G.S.S.*, para. 8.17; *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.32.

31. *G.S.S.*, para. 8.16.

32. For a discussion of the influence on women staff in CAEs see *NSW Report*, pp.48-51.

33. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.10.

34. *idem.*

35. These are much less possible for women to achieve than for men because of the average Australian woman's life pattern. Most Australian women marry (usually in their early 20s) and have children. This has meant, and will continue to mean, that education system planners can predict that many women teachers will: have breaks in service during their twenties; be relatively unable to travel or move during the years when their children are young; within their family, bear the major responsibility for child nurture; be freer from constraints on their time and mobility in their mid-thirties; return to the teaching service when the career structure is dominated by men whose service is unbroken. See *Inequality of Opportunity*, pp.10-11; "Career Structures" in *Inequality of Opportunity*, pp.18-19.

36. *NSW Report*, p.50. Early arrival at work which is possible if no responsibility is taken for children is also admired . . . "All such traditions have evolved within a male-dominated structure, have become fixed and in time invested with some mythical importance. Such aspects of College life have little to do with efficiency or effectiveness but have much to do with the assertion and the application of power." See also *Report of the South Australian Enquiry into Teacher Education*, (S.A.T.Ed.) Adelaide, 1980, para. 20.15.

37. *Vic. Report*, p.139. Courses in administration which are residential for six weeks tacitly discriminate against women.

38. *S.A.T.Ed., loc. cit.*

39. *NSW Report*, p.47.

40. *Women in Education*, p.12.

41. Problems in teacher education are compounded by the fact that the group who will make decisions about change in teacher education are almost exclusively male and are not therefore confronted with the dramatic results of change now faced by women. *Vic. Report*, p.144.

42. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.7.

43. *G.S.S.*, para. 8.16.

44. *Vic. Report*, p.138.

45. *NSW Report*, pp.49-50.

46. *ibid.*, p.50.

47. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.10.

48. *Women in Education*, p.15.

49. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.23.

50. See footnotes 35 and 36 above.

51. *Women in Education*, pp.18, 19.

52. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.28; *S.A.T.Ed.*, para. 20.17.

53. *Vic. Report*, p.139.

54. *idem.*

55. It was stressed (in *Women in Education*, pp.19-21) that in relation to breaks in service related

to child rearing the same conditions should apply for men who want to take advantage of them as women.

56. *S.A.T.Ed.*, para. 20.19.

57. *NSW Report*, p.52.

58. *Vic. Report*, pp.4, 5.

59. *idem.*

60. *G.S.S.*, para. 7.42.

61. This framework is an extension of one developed by Edgar, D.E. in "Adolescent Competence and Sexual Disadvantage", *La Trobe Sociology Papers*, June, 1974, (Paper No. 10).

62. Recommendations designed to equalise women's access to certifiable knowledge and experience must take this, and other factors that follow from it, into account.

63. It is not being argued that they replace academic qualifications and formal experience but that they contribute to the development of knowledge and experience relevant for a teacher and/or administrator. The NSW Department of Education has recently given the same stsatus to full time childrearing as to experience in industry when determining level of appointment.

64. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.10.

65. This would mean that if the (recommended) five years of family leave is taken, seniority, long service leave etc. would accrue and not simply be retained.

66. *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.28.

67. (a) The criticism of *school* curricula made in *Girls, Schools and Society* applies to curricula in teacher education institutions: "The omission of women and the tendency to overlook and depreciate their contribution to society and social change is a serious deficiency in many current school curricula. Summers, for example, observes that in the wider academic context women's history in Australia has been sorely neglected. She criticises major Australian historians for failing to include in their interpretive frameworks any consideration of what women in the past did." See also "An Object Lesson in Women's History" in Mercer, J. (ed.) *The Other Half*, Penguin, 1975, p.50.

(b) Carol Gilligan has shown how psychological models of 'normal' human behaviour and development such as those of Freud, Erikson, Kohlberg, are based on male experience. Female behaviour and development assessed in terms of such models are then defined as deviant and inferior. Fully human models, she argues, would be derived from and relate to the experience of both males and females. See "Woman's Place in Man's Life Cycle" in *Harvard Educational Review*. 1979, **49**, 431-446. Also Carol Gilligan, "In a different voice: Women's conception of the self and of morality", *Harvard Educational Review*, 1977, **47**, 481-517.

68. See Spender, Dale, *Man-Made Language*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981; Miller, Casey and Kate Swift, *Words and Women*. Ringwood: Penguin, 1979.

69. See following section.

70. There is need for research in this area at tertiary and lower levels in Australia.

71. *Vic. Report*, pp.4, 5.

72. (a) *G.S.S.*, para. 7.42 "A significant and relatively new means of achieving greater

understanding of sex role socialisation processes and also of remedying deficiencies in our knowledge about women is the incorporation or introduction of women's studies into educational institutions." See also *NSW Report*, p.52.

(b) See *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol 3, no. 4, 1978, for research on effect of women's studies courses in liberal arts colleges in the US. These studies, however, should not be taken out of context given the different awareness of feminist issues in parts of the U.S. compared to Australia.

73. *NSW Report*, p.52.

74. This does not ensure that members of the committee will be less sexist in their attitudes but it does direct attention to the importance of participation of males and females in course planning, which is a related issue. See also *Vic. Report*, p.144.

75. "Without precise evidence to the contrary, women are still commonly considered, by males, to be less capable than equally qualified men. Bias is specially pronounced against women highly qualified in their chosen fields and women who have entered traditionally male occupations." See Nieva, Veronica F. and Barbara A. Gutek, "Sex Effects on Evaluation", in *Academy of Management Review*, April 1980.

76. (a) *Women in Education*, p.12; *Inequality of Opportunity*, p.23.

(b) *Proposed Recommendations relating to the role of women in the Adelaide College of Advanced Education and the new Multi-campus institutions*. Adelaide College of the Arts and Education Staffing Committee Working Party, 1981, p.4.

77. *G.S.S.*, para. 9.25.

78. As could women's studies courses for men which would parallel black or aboriginal studies courses for whites.

79. This generalisation will not apply to *all* women, but it does apply to women as a social group. For an analysis of the socialisation of girls and women see Birgit Brock-Utne, "The Role of women, as mothers and members of society, in the education of young people for peace, mutual understanding and respect for human rights", paper presented at UNESCO Expert Meeting held at New Delhi, 7-11 December 1981.

80. Women are taught to acknowledge weakness (in themselves), to be submissive, to accept dependence on others, to hide their achievements, especially their intellectual accomplishments and to disguise their resourcefulness. For an examination of the psychological characteristics of women which shows their 'weaknesses' to be social 'strengths', and demonstrate the contribution women make to the maintenance of human values in our society in spite of their subordination, see Miller, J.B., *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, Penguin, 1978. Part II.

81. Women can find themselves in a further internal conflict especially within authoritarian institutions. As Ann Summers has pointed out, women generally possess a sympathy and sensitivity which makes them responsive to the suffering and oppression of others, but they have also internalised respect for and loyalty to those in authority and they help maintain those structures which generate the oppression they respond to. Summers, A., *Damned Whores and God's Police*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975, p.469.

82. *NSW Report* would be an exception here. See pp.47-52.

83. A teacher education institution with adequate creche facilities for staff and students and with family leave provisions which count toward promotion for men and women, would demonstrably value child rearing and human values more overtly than most such institutions do now.

84. Removal of formal legal barriers has not resulted in a significant change in the proportion of women in promotion positions. *(Inequality of Opportunity*, pp.8, 13 and 14.) There is not

sufficient evidence to show whether removal of practical barriers will be sufficient to affect the participation of women in education systems, these barriers not yet having been removed. More research needs to be done on the third question. Seeing women in junior positions of authority only is believed to reinforce girls' low self-esteem. *(G.S.S.*, para. 8.17*)*. Seeing them in positions of authority in a hierarchical system would be expected to affect positively the self esteem of some women. It need not affect in the same way the career aspirations of these women nor the self esteem of all women for important reasons discussed below.

85. Focusing on women as the source of the problem rather than on the institution is of course an example of 'blaming the victim'.

86. There is a parallel here in the Christian church which is generally considered to be hierarchical and sexist in the sense of systematically subordinating women, excluding them from the priesthood etc. It is significant that the two denominations in which women have been most publicly active are those which are least hierarchical, most democratic and most respectful of individual differences in both their form of government and view of authority and truth, viz. the Congregationalists and the Quakers.

87. And the same conditions would be expected to apply to any subordinate group, e.g. Aboriginals. Only where what Aborigines hold to be important is valued publicly will Aboriginal people come to value themselves publicly.

88. This is not to suggest that there are no teacher education institutions with some of the positive values outlined above. There are no doubt many and to the extent that they embody these values so they will be less sexist and less subordinating of women. However, the reports indicate that the majority are still cast in the hierarchical, competitive mode (even if they describe themselves otherwise).

89. Miller, J.B., *op. cit.*

90. Brock-Utne, B. *op. cit.*

WHO MAKES EDUCATION POLICY FOR RURAL CHILDREN?

S.K. RANDELL

The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of some of the key contributors to education policy making for rural children in Australia. The importance of policy implementers as key actors in the policy making process has been highlighted in recent policy studies. The shift from the traditional hierarchical model of the policy process as a technical, non-political activity imposed by policy makers and carried out by neutral implementers, to a model characterised by a reciprocal series of inter-relationships between the different groups of actors will be described. The contribution of parents, community, teachers, State systems, the Commonwealth and research to education policy for rural children through the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program from 1977-1981, will be discussed and appropriate policy implementation models will be explored.

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author alone.

Who Makes Policy?

Traditionally policy making and administration have been considered to be two separate and distinct fields of activity. In the classical view of organisational theory, organisations were considered to be hierarchical arrangements of workers carrying out policies that were made by legally constituted authorities (Weber, 1947). The centre periphery model has been rejected as studies of practice have shown that policy formulation and policy implementation are inextricably linked: the development of policy requires many interconnected steps of approval and reformulation (Schon, 1971). The complexities of the power play in policy making multiply in policy implementation, particularly in federal systems, such as Australia. As administrative authority is divided among different departments and agencies both bureaucrats and interest groups can greatly influence implementation, changing policy and making new policy as they proceed (Lindblom, 1980).

The art of policy making is about relationships among people (Wildavsky, 1979). The multiple, conflicting and vague objectives of most federal programs mirror the ambivalence and complexity of human behaviour. It is only when policy is worked out in practice at the 'street' level that the meaning of policy can be known (Weatherley and Lipsky, 1977). An understanding of the concept and process of policy implementation can shed light on the issue of who makes education policy.

Policy Implementation

The formal study of the implementation of public policies is still a relatively new area of research. In 1973, Pressman and Wildavsky wrote a significant case study on implementation in which they observed that there was 'no analytical literature on implementation' (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973: 166-175). In 1975, Hargrove published a book titled *The missing link*, in which he referred to policy implementation as the missing link in the study of social policy. Since then, numerous implementation studies have been published as journal articles (e.g. Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975; McLauchlin, 1975; Rein and Rabinovitz, 1978) or major publications (e.g. Bardach, 1977; Radin, 1977; Nakamura and Smallwood, 1980).

The studies show the implementation of policies to be dependent on four important variables: political factors, such as conflicts in values and attempts

to resolve them, economic factors, such as the availability of finance; sociological factors, such as interpersonal relationships; and geographical factors, such as territorial jurisdiction. Further, in a federal system, implementation requires co-ordination and integration of multiple functional inputs at central, regional and local levels (Bunker, 1972).

The following review of the literature traces the development of policy studies in the 1970s which have examined the concept and process of implementation.

Implementation as Interaction

The concept of implementation was pioneered by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) in their seminal case study on how the great expectations of the Washington federal program, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) established to produce jobs for the hard core unemployed were dashed in Oakland, California. Pressman and Wildavsky defined implementation as 'a process of interaction between the setting of goals and action geared to achieving them' (*ibid.:* xv). They distinguished implementation from initial policy formulation (setting goals, securing agreement and committing funds) and policy from program (government action to fulfil objectives). The establishment of a program was seen to be the first link of a causal chain connecting objectives to action with implementation as the forging of subsequent links to obtain the desired results. Because goals change as circumstances alter and initial conditions are subject to slippage, the metaphor doesn't hold: "In the midst of action the distinction between the initial conditions and the subsequent chain of causality begins to erode." *(ibid.)*

Implementers then become responsible for both the objectives and the action. Consideration of the difficulties of implementation should become part of initial policy formulation bringing means and ends together. Pressman and Wildavsky's work stressed the inter-relationship between policy design and implementation and provided a list of key elements for future use in model building.

Implementation as a Policy Delivery System

Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) were two of the first scholars to produce a model specifically to fit the policy implementation process (Figure 1). Based on a systems model (Easton, 1965) it distinguished policy from performance as two separate categories, to explain the imperfect correspondence between the policy adopted and the services actually provided. The linkage between policy and performance was seen to be shaped by six variables. The standards, objectives and resources implicit in the policy design had an impact on inter-organisational communication and enforcement activities, and resources affected both economic, social and political conditions, and the disposition of implementers. The characteristics of the implementing agencies also had a profound influence in interacting with the other variables to affect performance. Van Meter and Van Horn's work was particularly useful in drawing attention to some of the personal and psychological factors that influenced the actors in the implementation arena.

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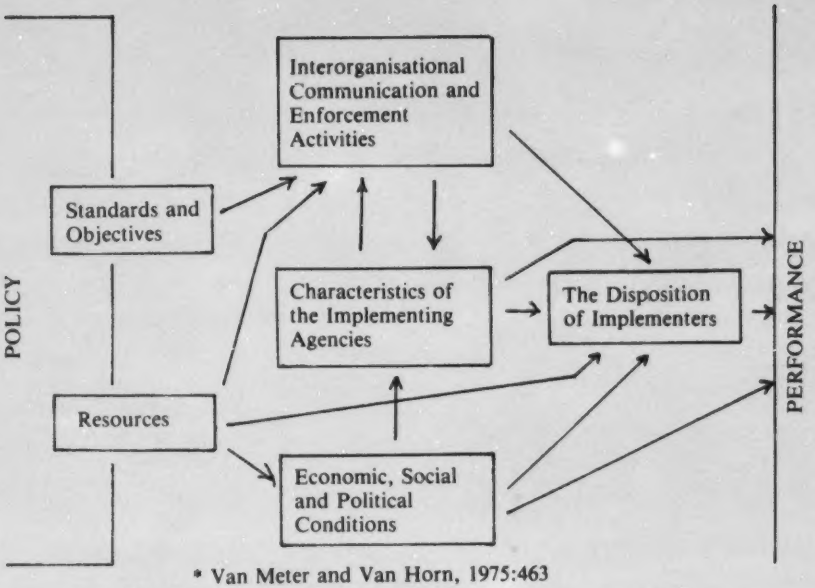


* Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975:463

Fig. 1. The Implementation Process

Implementation as Mutual Adaptation

In 1973 the Rand Corporation began a four year study of federal programs supporting educational change which identified three stages of innovation: initiation, where plans are conceived and resources sought; implementation, where the plans are translated into practice and adapted to the reality of the institutional setting; and incorporation, where the innovation becomes routine behaviour (Berman and McLauchlin, 1976). While it was recognised that the involvement of key participants in the early formative stage was important to the implementation stage, it was the latter which was the focus of the study. The key concept identified to describe effective implementation was *mutual adaptation* of both the project design and the institutional setting. This process occurred when the project was based on a problem solving approach and where there was a flexible attitude in coping with unanticipated implementation problems. It was most extensive when it occurred in highly complex projects which required significant change in both teachers and administrators. Successful implementation depended on a receptive institutional setting and participants learning by doing. The elements essential to mutual adaptation were found to be continuous planning, frequent staff meetings, inservice training and local materials development.

Implementation as Bargaining

Elmore (1978) built on early work in the areas of organisational research and public administration to describe implementation as essentially a *bargaining process* spanning federal, State and local levels where various

actors and organisations negotiate over the meaning of broad federal policy and how it should be practised. Bardach (1977) also described the implementation process as partly pressure politics where the bargaining which takes place in the policy adoption process carries over into the manoeuvring necessary in the policy implementation process. He saw the implementation process as a system of games where bargaining, manoeuvring and persuasion are applied under uncertain conditions by a variety of players to gain control of resources. The bargaining decision-making model works when agencies with divergent values and conflicting objectives have a common interest in coming together (Ingram, 1977). In this model the goals of federal programs are deliberately vague and administrative discretion, interest group participation and public accountability determine what strategies are possible.

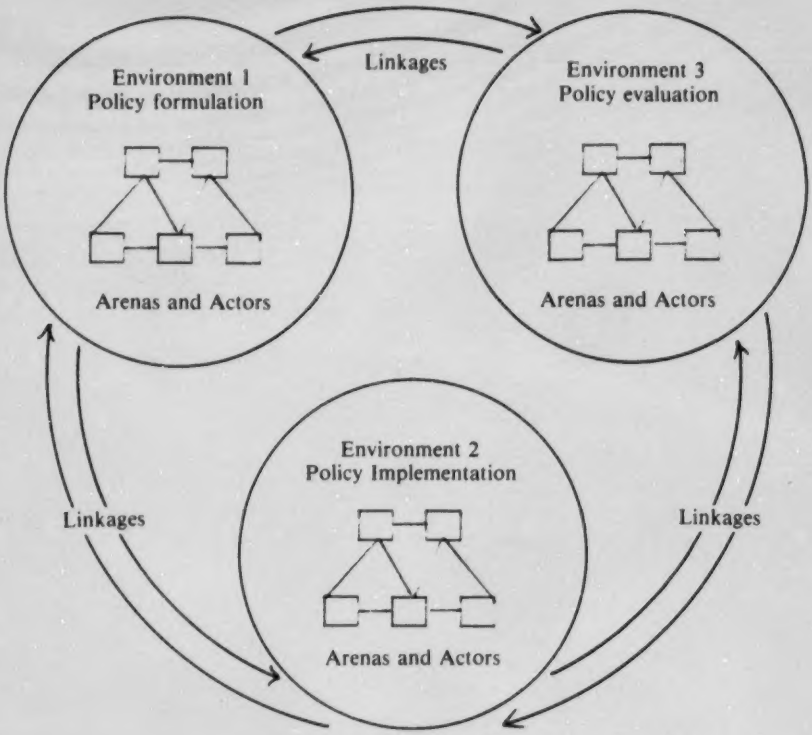
Implementation as a Circular Process

Rein and Rabinovitz (1978) identified three potentially conflicting imperatives as dominating the implementation process. The legal imperative stresses the importance of complying with what is legally required. The rational-bureaucratic imperative emphasises the need for action which is morally correct, administratively feasible and intellectually defensible, and includes a concern for institutional maintenance, protection and growth. The consensual imperative requires every effort to encourage agreement among the participants who have a stake in the outcome (*ibid.*: 309-15). These imperatives can only be reconciled if the implementation process is characterised by *circularity*. The actors can participate generally in any part of the process as legislation, guidelines, auditing and evaluation are locked together.

Nakamura and Smallwood (1980) built on this circularity model in defining the policy process as a system characterised by a set of interconnected elements each of which is directly or indirectly related to the other (Figure 2). The elements are policy environments: functional arenas where different aspects of the process take place and where different actors interact (*ibid.*:21). The three environments have the functions of policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation. There is a wide variety of actors, including government and non-government participants, who may take part in more than one environment, and the system is cyclical, not hierarchical. All three environments are inter-related and policies and actors can move from one to another. Linkages of communication and compliance among the different actors in the environment tie the policy system together.

Implementation as Evolution

Majone and Wildavsky (1978) brought policy formulation and implementation into even closer correspondence in their discussion of implementation as *evolution*. They argued that the notion of implementation as interaction minimises the importance of goals and plans, and recognises that policy formulation is merely a starting point for a bargaining process among implementers. Administrators should be centrally concerned with the process of implementation, not the results of the policy and implementers should be centrally concerned that the implementation process results in a



Rein and Rabinovitz, 1978: 27

Fig. 2. A System of Functional Environments

consensus of goals and a commitment to action, not that the prescribed policy is implemented. The emphasis should be placed on the political manoeuvring needed to achieve consensus. Policy goals, which should be recognised as often multiple, vague and conflicting, are dispositions to act. They are often confused in order to allow a start to be made, even though agreement cannot be reached on what should be done. Implementation shapes policies as they are continually changed by the action process, which also changes the resources and the objectives. It is therefore necessary continually to adjust both means and ends. Policy formulation also shapes implementation by defining the setting, supplying the resources, identifying the actors and describing their roles.

Implementation consists both of finding answers and framing questions. As the problems are reformulated solutions necessarily change. As errors are corrected the policy ideas as well as the outcomes change because the idea is part of the action.

> Implementation is evolution. Since it takes place in a world we never made, we are usually right in the middle of the process, with events having occurred before and

> (we hope) continuing afterward. At each point we must cope with new circumstances that allow us to actualise different potentials in whatever policy ideas we are implementing. When we act to implement a policy we change it. (*ibid.*: 144).

Implementation inevitably formulates as well as carries out policy. Its study is worthwhile, because it is a study of the struggle over the realisation of ideas.

Implementation as a Comprehensive Macro-Micro Process

Berman (1978) designed a conceptual framework to distinguish between macro implementation problems at the federal level and micro implementation at the local level. At the *macro* level there is a loosely coupled setting involving a variety of actors who make decisions about targets, resources and timing and pass those decisions through various levels of operation to local systems. The power to determine the outcome of the policy rests at the micro level with local people, not with federal administrators. At *micro* level policy is implemented through a process of mutual adaptation of the local policy with the characteristics of the local organisation. As policy passes through the macro level to the micro level it becomes input for other organisations and at each passage policy is redefined and there is potential for additional difficulties. The four passages in Berman's framework are the administration passage, where policy is translated into a program; the adoption passage, where the program is adopted locally; the micro implementation passage, where the local project leads to implementation practice; and technical validity, where implemented practice leads to outcomes. Policy outcomes are primarily dependent on micro implementation at the local level where there is only indirect influence from the higher levels of government.

A Complex Process

This brief review of the literature has indicated that studies of the policy making process during the 1970s have shifted progressively from the traditional hierarchical model of a technical, non-political activity imposed by policy makers and carried out by neutral implementers to models characterised by a reciprocal series of inter-relationships between different groups of actors. There has also been a consistent shift from policy makers to implementers as the key actors in the policy process. The dilemma with the developments is that now the process is clearly such a complex one that it is difficult to see where to begin to analyse it.

The model used in an analysis strongly influences what information is considered relevant and how the implementation process is viewed. Using alternative models together is likely to increase understanding of implementation. Elmore (1978) maintained that more descriptive studies of social program implementation were needed with analyses being undertaken from different perspectives. He did not attempt to define a single model which might capture all the essential features of the process, but stressed that the implementation process was complex and analysts needed to have a 'high tolerance for ambiguity' (*ibid.*: 228).

It is clear that elements of many of the models described in this review overlap. For example, mutual adaptation and bargaining are elements in the

circular process favoured by Rein and Rabinovitz (1978) where policy preferences are mediated by a number of actors who create a circular process characterised by reciprocal power relations and negotiations.

This paper explores the concept of policy making by reviewing the participation of key contributors at national, State and area levels to the implementation of the Commonwealth Schools Commission's *Disadvantaged Country Areas Program* from 1977 to 1981. It draws heavily on interviews conducted with forty-five national, State and area administrators for a phenomeno-logical study of what happens to a national intervention program when it is placed into the hands of a number of State and area educational agencies who have responsibility for implementing it. The interviews, conducted in 1980, focused on the sources of perceived difficulty encountered in implementing the Program.

The Disadvantaged Country Areas Program

A description of the historical background to the establishment of the Program and its objectives and operation are the subject of another paper (Randell, 1981). However, it is important to reiterate briefly the Program's objectives and operation to provide a setting for the discussion.

The Program aimed to provide equal educational opportunity through positive discrimination in resource allocation to schools serving Australia's most underprivileged rural areas. The additional resources were given to investigate new patterns of services, at reasonable cost, designed to improve the quality of educational provisions for all students in declared disadvantaged country areas, including correspondence students and those in government and non-government primary and secondary schools. State government and non-government education authorities recommended the areas they considered should participate in the Program and these were declared by the Commonwealth Minister for Education (Figure 3). Important aspects of the Program were its joint nature, covering both government and non-government schools, and its emphasis on rural communities working with teachers to develop initiatives involving the sharing of resources and facilities.

The Program has demonstrated the importance of changing processes in the delivery of country education rather than merely making additional resources available. Funds provided through the Program were channelled through State Treasuries to State education departments, which maintained overall responsibility for expenditure, but decisions about the types of projects funded rested with broadly-based State and area committees in response to ideas generated at the local level (Figure 4).

The key contributors to policy making and implementation of the Program have included administrators at Commonwealth, State and area levels, academics, interest groups, community people, politicians, teachers, parents and students. Each one of these groups will be examined briefly in turn to assess its part in the three environments of the policy process: policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation.

DISADVANTAGED COUNTRY AREAS
AUSTRALIA 1981
Not shown are the areas involving the isolated children of the South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australian Correspondence Schools & the Port Augusta School of the Air (S A)

Figure 3.

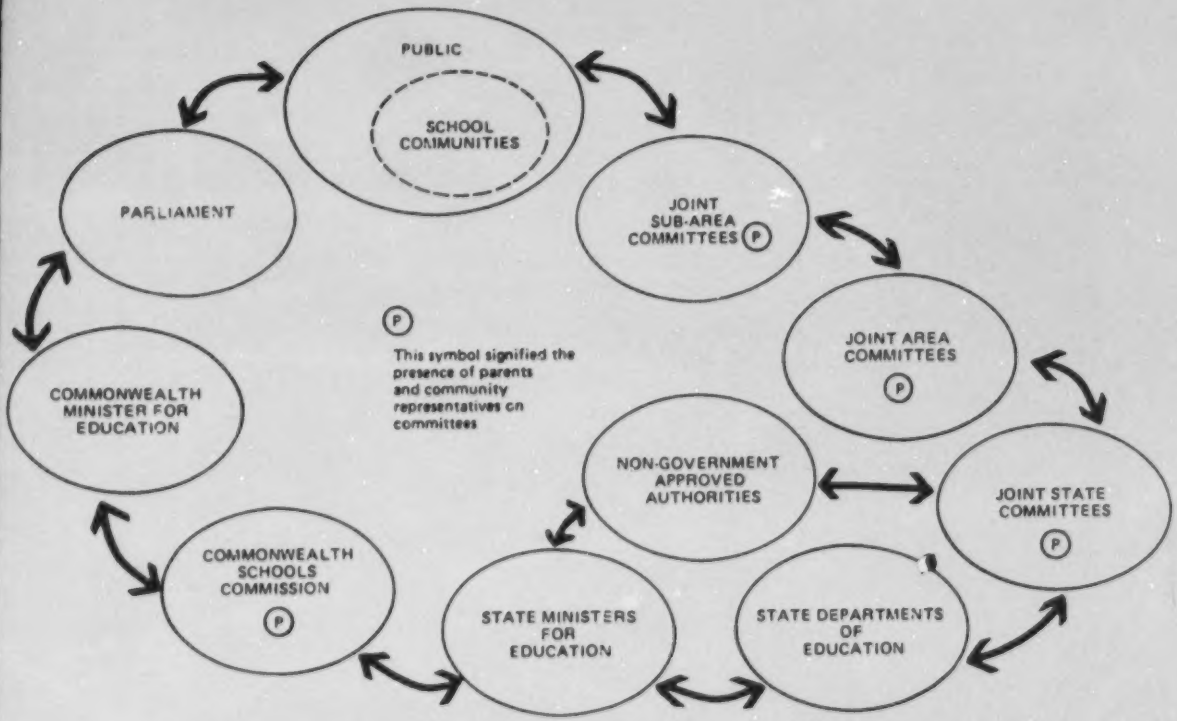

PUBLIC
SCHOOL COMMUNITIES
PARLIAMENT
JOINT SUB-AREA COMMITTEES (P)
JOINT AREA COMMITTEES (P)
COMMONWEALTH MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
(P) This symbol signified the presence of parents and community representatives on committees
NON-GOVERNMENT APPROVED AUTHORITIES
JOINT STATE COMMITTEES (P)
COMMONWEALTH SCHOOLS COMMISSION (P)
STATE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

Figure 4. Flow Chart for Decision-Making and Accountability in the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program.

Commonwealth Administrators

In the 1970s a number of government enquiries into rural issues in Australia stimulated policy development and set the scene for changes in educational approaches. These included the Poverty Commission's *Report on Poverty and Education* (Fitzgerald, 1976) and the Senate's *Report on Education on isolated school children* (Australia, 1977). The Fitzgerald report identified rural schools and the nature of their staffing as major problems, and commented that much of the curriculum seemed irrelevant to the needs and backgrounds of country students.

In particular the report noted the severe difficulties faced by early school leavers. Country children were found to leave school earlier than those in cities, to be less likely to proceed to tertiary and further education than city children and to aspire to jobs of lower occupational status than did urban students. The Senate committee expressed concern with the quality of education provided by small schools in isolated areas, the restricted range and continuity of subjects offered in remote secondary schools, the limited boarding facilities for isolated children, the obsolescence of some instructional materials provided in correspondence education and the lack of special education facilities for rural students. The report concluded that if Australia were to benefit from total national development, isolated areas had to be given greater consideration, and families both encouraged to live and work in the country and enabled to stay there without disadvantage.

In its *Report for the Triennium 1976-78* the Schools Commission reviewed the funding requirements for rural education within a framework of quality and equality of educational opportunity (Australia, 1975). It recommended allocations within the General Recurrent Grants Program to provide activities designed to improve country education, and within the Capital Grants Program to upgrade residential facilities for students and improve teacher housing in country areas. Owing to the economic climate, these recommendations were not accepted by the Government of the day, however, they became the basis for the funds that were specifically allocated for country education in 1977. In its *Report: Rolling Triennium 1977-79* the Commission recommended the inclusion of a disadvantaged country areas element within the Disadvantaged Schools Program in recognition of the different complex of variables associated with educational disadvantage in country schools (Australia, 1976 (2)). A total of $4.1 million was allocated to allow pilot action to begin in a limited number of the most affected areas.

The Commission refrained from detailing specific policy guidelines for the Program in order to allow State committees to develop their structures and approaches without undue imposition from above. The broad policy statements in the Commission's reports and annual guidelines allowed considerable flexibility in interpretation when States set themselves to working out detailed guidelines for administering the general aims (Australia, 1976a). Some of the conceptual variations arose because of the conflict between the theoretical framework and the practicalities of finance. Insufficient funds were available either for a separate Country Education Program or to split the Disadvantaged Schools Program into two distinct components, urban and

rural, and identify clusters of disadvantaged rural schools. The limited area basis alternative meant that, in some cases, the geographical dispersal of schools was so great that the sharing notion of the Program was impossible to implement.

Other variations related to different interpretations of the Commission's broad general guidelines. The Program was interpreted by some as a community development one and by others as a program to mobilise community resources for the education of children. Similarly there were different interpretations of the pilot nature of the Program: some emphasised that it was to be the first stage of a bigger program and others stressed that the Program was intended to pilot new ways of delivering educational services. Flexibility also existed about the target group: some gave weight to programs for children whose socio-economic status was low, while others considered the emphasis to be on remote children who received limited educational services. This reflected the Commission's perspective of recognising social needs within the framework of the effects of isolation and remoteness on the education of children. The Program was not designed to assist children who were sent away from country areas to boarding schools, but the children who stayed in rural communities for their schooling.

The Commission constantly kept in touch with State implementers of the Program in ongoing policy formulation. State co-ordinators of the Program in each State met annually with a Commissioner and the Program director to exchange information and discuss policy issues, and the Commission adapted its guidelines as the monitoring process showed this to be necessary. For example, in 1977 a key emphasis had been on the sharing of resources across areas. The South Australian experience in its most sparsely populated areas showed that such sharing was impossible where schools were separated by distances of up to 300 kilometres, and Commonwealth policy guidelines were changed to allow school based projects in such circumstances. The South Australian committee was still so committed to the sharing process that even in these cases they encouraged proposals between the school and the community in conjunction with school based proposals.

From the commencement of the Program the Commission held discussions with State systems about the desirability of continuous evaluation of the Program. The idea of a national evaluation was rejected as most systems preferred to use the expertise of their Research Branches for State evaluation studies, but committees agreed to build an ongoing evaluation process into activities at State and area levels. The Commission promoted studies of country education through its Special Projects Program, for example, the study of rural school leavers (Stoessiger, 1980) and its bibliography of country education (Australia, 1978).

State Administrators

There is a long history of expensive State provision of education for students living in country areas in Australia and favourable attitudes of State Governments towards solving rural problems. Although the Commission initiated the Program, put forward broad guidelines about aims,

administration and evaluation, and supplied the funds it was left to the States to run the Program. Each adapted the aims and administrative procedures to the unique features and particular needs of the children in its country areas.

All States supported the Program's general objectives of developing ways of improving the provision of educational services to country children at reasonable cost through joint and area based programs. In South Australia there were so few non-government schools in the country areas that the joint nature of the Program was impossible to adhere to. Because of the sparse nature of the population the State Committee paid particular attention to building up networks of mutual support and the sharing of resources among schools to assist communities to reduce the effects of isolation on students. In New South Wales special attention was given to projects which aimed to reduce the adverse affects of geographical isolation and enable parents, communities and administrators to apply their local knowledge of needs and conditions to the planning and execution of projects. In Victoria a major additional aim has been to develop a clear definition of the nature of rural disadvantage.

Most States decided deliberately to build the administration of the Program into the normal administration of education, on the grounds that unless the committee could work with systems through schools in the areas, in the longer run the Program would not be successful. In one State the central committee made a deliberate decision initially to work outside the normal administrative structures in place. In this State, following political action from community people as well as committee members at area level, all funds were distributed direct to areas. This action was explicitly designed to break the system's control over funding on the grounds that where people have power over a budget their attention is focused on alternative projects and greater accountability in making choices is possible.

Each State Committee adopted different ways to develop proposals. The model developed in one State was for sub-groups of the State committee to visit the area, talk to teachers, parents and community people to identify needs, and work out solutions. Discussion took place with people who had been administrators, principals and teachers in the area as well as with people from the Planning and Curriculum Branches to design effective delivery of a requested service. In another State needs had been identified in a research study and the State Committee, acting as an area committee, set about designing programs to meet those needs. In most States the onus was put on the people in the areas themselves to identify resources as well as needs within their areas and design programs to satisfy those needs using local resources.

The policies State Committees adopted for the approval of projects sometimes differed from each other. For example, while some committees emphasised the importance of projects harnessing computer technology one committee decided that computers would not help schools to overcome isolation, remoteness and poverty. Some committees adopted fairly rigid sets of guidelines whereas others avoided this, believing it led to stereotyped proposals where people learned to play the system in order to get funds flowing.

Policy decisions had to be taken about the ownership and responsibility for equipment purchased with Program funds, the safety requirements for equipment purchased and the legal liability in case of accident. In most States during the operation of the Program there have been growing economic restraints which have made education department policies more and more restrictive. For example, in one State a cabinet ruling, which set the size of the Government fleet of vehicles, prevented the purchase of additional vehicles for shared country projects. In these circumstances ownership of a four wheel drive vehicle or bus for the outback could be vested in school councils.

The participation of both Catholic and government system administrators on State Committees led to some interesting policy decisions to accommodate staff ceilings and purchasing regulations in the Government systems. In two States the Catholic Education Commissions employed up to twenty people with adequate expertise for specific projects but whose training and experience would have prevented their appointments by the education departments. Vehicles and other equipment were purchased through Catholic Commissions to avoid delays encountered through Government Stores. The exercise of working through the problems was as important as questioning time-honoured procedures that were sometimes inefficient or inappropriate for the new Program.

While these new ways of working had advantages, they also created problems. An inevitable reaction to these difficulties was for some systems to prepare administrative guidelines, designed to eliminate some of the embarrassments which had been inadvertently caused by area committees employing staff without Public Service Board approval, and buying cars without making provision for their replacement:

> So we had the old battle about whether administrative guidelines had implications for policy and for the educational programs or whether they didn't. They of course said 'No, they are just administrative' and our argument, in the State Committee was 'Of course they are. That's what administrative guidelines do.' (Parent, State Committee).[1]

It may be fair to say that in some States responsibility for policy making over administration and procedures was handed initially to State and area committees almost by default:

> My view is . . . that there was a feeling perhaps back in '77 that if (the senior people in the system) shut their eyes long enough, these things would go away, that they wouldn't last long and that things would come back to normal procedures and normal channels (later). Now I think that if, in the early piece, interest had been taken by some of the senior people, and I am talking about systems people . . . who work out the operations and administrative procedures, and a greater attention had been paid to detail and trying to predict some of the difficulties that would come up, schools and regional committees would have had a clearer idea of their responsibilities and the senior administration would have seen the necessity to

1. The quotations used throughout the paper are taken from tape recorded interviews with Program administrators at State and area levels on implementations difficulties. 'Catholic State administrator' is an abbreviation for an administrator in a Catholic system on a State committee. Similar appropriate abbreviations have been used for administrators in Government systems, and parents on State committees.

provide more administration support staff to respond to help run the Program. (Government State administrator).

There was inevitably tension between State and area committees about policies on how money should be spent:

> A lot of people would want to say we should have given those areas total autonomy from the start. I didn't and I don't regret any of that . . . The aim was to make them competent, make them capable of running things themselves. But they didn't have the skills and it's a naivety to think that you can all of a sudden hand over control to people . . . given the structure of Australian education and the history of total dependence on central control . . . The only way that they can learn to control things is by controlling them . . . The aim was to develop skills in people so that they could do it . . . Now we're at the point where we can say to the area committees 'Do it all', the (State) committee backs off and becomes more of a policy co-ordinating group for the State. (Academic, State Committee).

Each State has tackled research and Program evaluation in different ways. In Tasmania, the Huon Valley area evaluation was based on a research study which established an understanding of the economic and social contexts that may not have been obtained any other way (Behrens, 1976). In Victoria, the chairperson of the State Committee was deliberately selected as an academic outside both government and non-government systems with a specific research interest in systemic disadvantage. This committee involved an academic research team in an early outside evaluation of the first year's operation of the Program. No other State had full time research people as members of their committees, although Queensland employed an evaluation officer to evaluate programs under an evaluation committee's direction, and in other States, departmental Research Branches have undertaken various studies on the Program. In New South Wales area committees engaged university staff to undertake research studies. All States supported the Commission policy of building ongoing evaluation into funded projects and the results of this reflection on action has been most significant in policy development.

The administrators at State level were heavily involved in both policy formulation and implementation and as they received feedback from research and evaluation projects and from area committees about the operation of the Program, they modified Program policies.

Area Committees

In most States decision making was devolved to the level of the declared disadvantaged country areas. The areas became the arena for testing the feasibility and extent of local policy making. Area committees, often comprising half lay and half school people, were elected to survey and define area wide needs and design projects to meet those needs. In more than one State, committees simultaneously surveyed the physical and personnel resources already available in the schools and communities in the area. They saw that many of the rich resources in the areas could be utilised for local benefit.

Throughout the life of the Program there has been debate about how effective local decision making could be. Those State committees which had

emphasised from the beginning that all decision making should be decentralised to local committees came to believe that there was a need for a healthy balance between local initiation of plans and support from outside consultants who had the time and expertise to assist. Certainly without being made aware of the range of options available local people could not be expected to advocate far-ranging changes with radically new patterns of service, even though just to engage a range of local people in the Program itself broadened options. However, some specific areas would inevitably be neglected without outside help:

> The whole area of girls has been incredibly neglected. I would think that if we're going to make any advance in that area it is going to have to become a specific central thrust. The momentum would have to come from using people like the women and girls adviser. (Government State administrator).

By 1980 there was fairly widespread consensus that outside consultants had a valuable role to play in the Program:

> I worked for ten years as a researcher and I believe that there is such a thing as expert knowledge that you can get from literature, research and other people's experience. A consultant can develop and can share with other people and all wisdom doesn't reside in a group of local people reflecting on their needs. It needs somebody like a consultant to come in and talk with these people and help them articulate their needs and develop a project. (Government State administrator).

The following example illustrates the interplay between the State and area committees where a long running battle grew up over policy concerning projects for transport and travel:

> If (the committees) could only have subsidised transport they tended to think that all the rest would come, whereas the State committee was resisting that and trying to point them to other things that were the end: transport was a means to the end and they tended to see it as the end. (Independent, State administrator).

In some cases the administrative apparatus of operating the area programs became cumbersome. It was easy for the number of people whose ideas should be fed into the committee to become so large as to reduce the sense of participation by individuals. In a few areas certain strong individuals dominated committees at times in a way which did not develop areas as communities of action but made the committees themselves battlegrounds of sectional interests. Nevertheless, the area committees became critical places for community members, interest groups, administrators, teachers and parents to interact in the policy process. In implementing and evaluating the Program, the committees continued to formulate policy.

Community

The effective participation of community people in policy making varied from State to State and area to area and depended on the degree to which the Program was seen to be community-based rather than school-based. The following account of the effects of a decision in one area to make the Program

school-based following its initial operation as a community-based program illustrates the tensions involved:

> The issue and the decision are not simply a matter of academic interest. The committee may be seen as a composition of educational and community delegates. A decision to make the project community based would have legitimised the role of non-educationalists as experts in interpreting the (State) committee's guidelines, applying the relevant criteria to submissions, evaluating the managerial feasibility of suggestions and identifying the possible beneficial educational outcomes of specific proposals. The net effect of interpreting the project as school based was to reduce the perceived importance of the non-educationalists. Interviews with community members consistently showed that they believed themselves individually and collectively to lack the competence and confidence to interpret the guidelines and to play a significant role in policy matters. These perceptions were not shared by the Co-ordinator because of their greater familiarity with the language of the Schools Commission and their detailed knowledge of the day to day requirements of administration, educationalists, in particular administrators, quite unintentionally strengthened their image as experts. Their expertise was legitimised by the decision to make the Program school based. Community delegates accepted the decision and now defer to the expertise of the educationalists. As a consequence, community delegates play a reduced role in policy formation at the area level. (Victoria, 1978:65).

Where control over funds in the Program was vested in elected committees outside the school governance structure, the community role in planning school change became more comparable with the professional educators. The area basis widened the range of community resources which could be drawn on and prevented competition among schools in drawing on them unevenly. By turning the sights of the schools outwards, a broader perspective was given to the kinds of curriculum changes necessary to improve educational programs. Community participation greatly increased the range of actors contributing to policy making at the local level.

Interest Groups

The major interest group involved in the Program has been the *Isolated Children's Parents Association* (ICPA) and it has been a powerful influence:

> The ICPA are dedicated and interested, a highly organised and intelligently led group of people who seek every opportunity where it is to their advantage. I don't think they ever pressed anything unreasonable and part of our attitude as a State committee was . . . make the best use of them as possible, their expertise, their knowledge and their ability. (Government State administrator).

The ICPA was represented formally on five State committees and on every area committee in Queensland, and informally where the parent representatives on several area committees were members of the association. Their political contacts were often an asset and they contributed effectively to committee decision-making. Nevertheless, some administrators expressed concern that ICPA's strong interest in the problems of isolated children would affect the commitment of resources to the extent of limiting opportunities for other country children. In two States evaluation of itinerant teachers' programs, which were established because of ICPA support, indicated that

these programs, while valuable, were too costly for the proportion of isolated children in the total population of the area:

> The area involved worked it out very well by having a very good evaluation done by the people involved, and including a representative of the ICPA who was excellent, so that the results of the evaluation had more validity and were acceptable to the people involved. (Parent, State Committee).

This was a case of an interest group involved in formulating, implementing and evaluating a program which evolved into a more effective strategy where itinerant teachers were used not only for isolated children but also to support teachers and assist students in isolated schools.

A contrast to the ICPA would be the powerlessness, indeed lack of interest groups related to some other sub-groups of the country population, in particular Aborigines. Only one Aborigine has ever served on a State committee, and only two white Australians, in their capacities as co-ordinators of Aboriginal education for their system, have been members of area committees. Few programs have been designed specifically for Aboriginal children. Similarly the rural poor were often neglected:

> My thought in retrospect is that we didn't get to isolated people. We got to the people who were very concerned, accessible people. We did not get to, and we have not yet got to, the parents who are a Main Roads employee, a miner in the gemfields, a boundary rider, a fettler. (Catholic State administrator).

Although there is a growing realisation that local communities have to identify their own educational needs, it is likely that these decisions may be made by people in the community who are traditionally more active in such matters and who represent only the interests of their own groups. The representation of the interests of less articulate groups, including students and the unemployed, are often left to the social awareness of others in the community. Unless means are found to involve the more reticent members of the community the Program may tend to improve conditions for the more articulate ones who already do best out of formal educational provision, and not help those who could benefit most.

Teachers

The participation of teachers in the Program has been varied. At its best it has extended the thinking of teachers beyond their own classroom to other classrooms, to the school as a whole, and then to a group of schools; militating against any professional isolation, parochialism and suspicion of outsiders. Through the area based approach schools have been brought into closer contact with each other, widening the range of ideas and experiences to draw on. Because teachers gained a knowledge of all schools in the area they have been more readily able to concede the greater needs of other schools and the possibility of sharing resources, rather than having under their school's own roof and in its sole control all the resources needed for its educational programs.

In one State early emphasis on community participation alienated teachers who felt they had been excluded from the Program. Staff turnover and

inexperienced staff also limited effective teacher participation in some areas. Nevertheless, despite heavy commitments to their schools and in their communities, many principals and teachers have contributed significantly in extra activities, attending committee meetings at school, sub-area and area levels. A great weight of responsibility has been accepted graciously and professionally by teachers, and they have taken advantage of opportunities to develop relevant and original ideas and practices. Some teacher consultants have been particularly effective in supporting isolated teachers, encouraging professional growth and developing policy on the most effective way to work as itinerant educators, e.g. in groups and for extended periods.

Teachers associations have generally been supportive although not taking much initiative in developing educational policy. Expected union antagonism to employment of untrained community personnel in music and technical education programs has not eventuated. In Queensland the union has developed policy on conditions teachers should be expected to work under in country projects involving itinerant teachers living on stations and travelling in caravans. In other States unions have give attention to policy on appropriate remuneration for teachers working in new roles and living in unusual circumstances, and have worked to establish incentives for teachers to stay in remote places for longer than they might otherwise have done.

In Tasmania in the Huon Valley area, the Program stimulated principal participation to the extent that for the first time neighbouring principals of government and non-government schools met regularly throughout the year to discuss educational policy for the schools in the area. Principals associations, however, have not been involved in the Program in any policy making activities.

Students

To date there have been only tentative steps towards involving students in decision making about the Program. In 1978 a Commissioner suggested to a Victorian Country Education Project conference that student representation on committees should be considered, even if limited to students who had recently left school and could reflect on their own experience. In 1979 the State Committee included students in a State level conference to decide future directions for the Program. Each area chose its student delegates. They participated confidently and competently in joint sessions and held their own meeting from which arose positive suggestions for future policy.

Students have been involved significantly in decision making about individual projects, such as ROCTAPUS (Really Outstanding Country Television About Practically Unlimited Subjects) in Queensland and the Bourke Radio Station where they decide on program content.

> The kids are involved through the school and they see it very much as their radio station. That's a thing I want to continue to encourage. Although there is a very high adult participation and adult imposition of ideas, the kids still are very much the innovators and doers and that is important. (Project co-ordinator).

The Process of Interaction among the Participants

The importance of actors in the policy process, their personalities and ability to communicate or obstruct, was critical to the successful implementation of the Program.

There was an amazing commitment from community people in all States. In one of them five women, all housewives, represented their sub-areas on the area committee. Although without experience in educational leadership, they had tremendous enthusiasm and were learning a great deal through the experience of being on the committee. They were excited about taking the initiative in developing their own expectations about the kind of education their children should be receiving in schools.

Perhaps one of the greatest successes of the Program has been the stimulation it has given to a variety of participants to work together to decide rural education policy. In September 1978 representatives of the Correspondence School, the School of the Air, the Isolated Children's Parents Association, the Priority Country Education Program, principals of remote schools and administrative officers of the South Australian Education Department met in Port Augusta, South Australia. From their deliberations came a positive strategy for involving remote schools in the education of the isolated child: a host school program which makes teachers and resources of local schools available to outback children and their supervisors, facilitates communication between the school and isolated families and provides feedback from local schools to the Correspondence School, Schools of the Air and the Regional Office. The project exemplified "the combination of local initiative and commitment, plus innovation and co-operation for which the Schools Commission was aiming" (Brindal, 1981).

Another strength of the Program has been its capacity to harness organisations in country towns to work together rather than along. Service, sporting and cultural organisations have been well represented at sub-area level and a significant number of shire councillors have been involved in most areas. Government departments, such as Agriculture and Youth, Sport and Recreation, and institutions, such as Technical and Further Education colleges and colleges of advanced education have been involved through representation, and are working together to avoid duplication and to provide essential services to country areas, which have in the past been missing out.

In some areas, clusters of schools which had been traditional rivals did not want to work with each other. Groups in areas only 10 to 15 kilometres apart, with excellent road linkages, were often as adamant as groups in areas facing distances of 100 kilometres that interacting and sharing was impossible. Such groups gained tremendously when they came together to work for a common cause.

Conclusion

Darnell and Higgins (1981) contend that diversity is a key feature of the rural milieu of Australia and that educational provision for people in remote places has not been sufficiently flexible to cope with this diversity.

> What must be acknowledged by policy makers and planners at one end of the education enterprise and teachers and support personnel at the other is that there is no single theory, principle, concept or notion that is universally appropriate to education in non-urban settings. (*ibid.*:15).

There is evidence in Australia that people are now more willing to consider flexible educational provision, and this is being translated into policy and practice as more actors are involved in the total policy making process.

After five years of operation the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program has been separated from the Disadvantaged Schools Program and will exist in its own right as the Country Education Program. It was one of the few initiatives given additional funding at the commencement of the 1982-84 triennium, a time when the Innovations Program was abolished and capital expenditure was reduced. But how successful has the Program been in influencing the State systems in long term rural education policy? While the Commission Program has been valuable in piloting new ways of delivering services and maximising an impact in a limited geographical area, it is more important to influence the policies of education systems.

One State Committee used the Program to try to raise awareness at political level of the need for a co-ordinated rural education policy.

> (There is a) lack of reasonable, thought-out and sensibly articulated rural education policy from the State. I mean, we fought for that, we used the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program to fight for that in every corner in head office . . . I thought it might have something that would appeal to our present State Government because our present Premier is very interested in rural education matters. Any sort of development of a rural education policy was firmly blocked at middle management levels because of the costs; because any improvement in rural education is going to be very costly and that frightens them" (Government State administrator).

In Tasmania the Program was attributed with some influence in the boost the Education Department gave to district schools in providing them with additional resources so that they could offer an effective education to Year 10 for all children within the local community (Behrens, 1978). In Western Australia a National Centre for Research on Rural Education has been established to co-ordinate research on improving education services for country children. The centre is about to implement a national survey of parents who live in extreme isolation to establish their perceptions of the education their children receive and use this data to make policy recommendations to the States and Commonwealth governments about rural education. Some States have recently established Superintendencies of Distance Education, and increased support and resources for country education. The Program has built networks among people interested in rural education across Australia in universities and systems, among city and country people, and especially among people within specific country areas.

In the uncompleted policy research study from which the interview material used in this paper is drawn, difficulties in policy implementation were related to the nature and availability of resources, operational demands and the need to share authority. In particular, difficulties revolved around the problems of

reconciling the different perspectives of the Schools Commission, State systems' officials, parents, teachers and community people. The compromises resulting were exasperating both for those seeking rapid centrally directed change and for those seeking change through initiatives at the local level.

But the compromises recognised the continually shifting balance of interests among national and State governments, central, State and local administrators, teachers and parents, government and non-government organisations and community interests. The balance of interests exists in the Commission itself and has been built into the Program through its State and area level committee structures. The context for Program implementation consists of diverse groups each pressing for what seems to those involved to be legitimate and reasonable views. Implementation can only take place as these interests are contacted, consulted and reconciled, and can only occur in the field, not in national offices.

Few people at either Commonwealth or State level would have given consideration to which model of policy making was explicit in the way the Program was set up in 1977. This discussion has shown that the Program's implementation is best illustrated by the model in Figure 2 where the three major arenas are policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation and different actors interact in these arenas as different aspects of the process take place. The interaction has included some bargaining and a significant degree of mutual adaptation. A wide variety of actors, government and non-government, administrators, teachers, parents and community people participated, often in more than one environment. In its most recent triennial report the Commission reiterated that a crucial concept of the Program is that co-operation across sectors, among schools and their communities can strengthen rural education (Australia, 1981).

In addition to being a circular process it can be argued that the implementation process has been evolutionary, explicit in the transformation of the Program's setting, resources and objectives in 1982:

> As foreshadowed in earlier reports the Commission has reviewed aspects of the Program and now makes the following recommendations to take effect from 1982: the Program, in line with an evolution in its rationale from a concern principally with socio-economic disadvantage to a concern for special issues in country education (or rural disadvantage), should now be known as the Country Areas Program; the value and practicability of the Program having been established, its pilot status should be removed; funding should be increased progressively over the triennium; a new financial basis more in line with the rationale of the Program should be adopted. (*ibid.*:378).

In my view policy implementers have been the key actors in the policy making process involved in the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program. The widening of participation to people beyond the school has protected strategies from being increasingly brought back into the traditional boundaries of the school, serving simply to provide resources and services that educational systems find difficulty covering. Furthermore, the joint nature of the Program, with its participative decision making, shared with non-government schools has given the Program a unique character.

It should be possible to adopt more widely in education policy making the process which the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program has shown to be successful: the practice of engaging local communities with professionals in consideration of improved educational services. At its best the Program has stimulated the development of small learning communities in rural areas where people are gaining greater confidence to enter the political process and take part in decisions which affect their lives, in particular, in improving educational opportunities for their children.

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A FREIRE-APPROACH TO ABORIGINAL EDUCATION POLICY MAKING

ALAN E. RANDELL

This paper is divided into five parts. In the introductory section, there is a fleeting reference to a number of current concerns being expressed about Aboriginal education especially by those standing outside of the Australian educational scene. It is suggested that some of the ideas of Paulo Freire may have special relevance to policy making in this field of education. In sections two and three of the paper, aspects of Freire's theories and their implications for policy making are described. This is followed in section four, by a description and analysis of a recent project in policy making in Aboriginal education. The project was based primarily on Freirean principles. The final section offers a number of generalisations drawn from the experiences of this project. It is argued that the application of Freire's principles to policy making especially in Aboriginal education, is both feasible and desirable.

Introduction

Paulo Freire — Educator and Social Activist

In a series of books, journal articles and transcripts of his numerous dialogues with other educators, the Brazilian Paulo Freire has presented a commentary on life and culture and a vision of social change that is as exciting as it is dynamic. While his earlier concern focused essentially on the need for effective adult literacy programs in Brazil and Chile, his writings have steadily unfolded a complex, challenging and revolutionary view of education and society. Formal education is but one part of a framework of theoretical ideas that grapples with ultimate purpose in life, a sociology of knowledge and a pedagogy that is both political and aggressive in its determination to reform society. Liberation of mind and action and the enabling of people to become more fully human in an evolving physical and cultural world where dehumanising forces are constantly opposed, is a basic tenet of his writings. His theories, while still not well known or readily understood have nevertheless caused an increasing number of educators and administrators, both in the western and third worlds, to question the moral as well as educational foundations of their own society. In Australia, one apparent area where Freire's ideas could prove illuminating and constructive is in the field of Aboriginal education and more particularly, in Aboriginal education policy making.

Aboriginal Education in the 70's

In one of the very few comprehensive surveys of schooling for Aborigines, comment was sought from staff and principals on every Aboriginal primary and secondary student in W.A.

> The picture that emerges of the education of Aboriginal children is a grim one. The vast majority of Aboriginal primary school pupils are considered by their teachers to be performing at least below the average in all academic subjects. Such children are reported to be in need of special help in the school situation which, for most, is presently unavailable. Indeed, where it is available, teachers do not think that it is greatly improving student performance. Aboriginal children are said to be insufficiently motivated for school work, to have poor concentration, inadequate language skills, low reading capacity, excessive shyness, poor attendance, and to be

the victims of under-encouragement by parents. All of these problems were assessed as being much more significant for Aboriginal children than for non-Aborigines. (Tannock & Punch, 1975:12).

The report of the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.) team's visit to the Aborigines in mid-1981 highlighted some of the difficulties faced by Aboriginal children.

> Traditional Aboriginal society required co-operation and sharing based on distinct cultural values and a distinct form of social organisation. Because of this distinctness of Aboriginal history, the Aboriginal child approaches schooling and education with a radically different outlook. The dominant white culture places the Aboriginal child at a severe disadvantage often with feelings of low self-esteem and embarrassment. (W.C.C., 1981:43).

In its report, the team also drew attention to some of the disturbing statistics that suggest that Aboriginal education cannot be regarded as having been particularly successful in the past.

> Our attention was drawn to the insensitivity and inflexibility of the education system which has resulted in statistics that indicate:
>
> — from a total of about 60,000 Aboriginal children, approximately 15 percent are currently studying at secondary school but only 2 percent proceed beyond Grade 9, compared with 24 percent of white children;
>
> — 90 percent of all unemployed Aborigines are unskilled;
>
> — 30 percent of Aboriginal communities outside capital cities are in areas where little or no English is spoken; and 62 percent of the population in those areas speak little or no English;
>
> — the majority of Aboriginal students follow programs designed for the general population. (W.C.C., 1981:43).

It is appreciated that a number of recent innovations in Aboriginal education will not have had sufficient time to influence some of the statistics quoted above. Yet despite the many changes that have occurred in this field during the past decade and the heightened awareness of governments and education departments about the situation, there are still many who have misgivings about the directions being taken and the effectiveness of the policies formulated. For instance there are educators who are not confident of the long term benefits arising from recent moves amongst Aboriginal communities to develop independent schools for their children. There are others, including many Aborigines, who raise questions about the advantages for children attending bilingual programs and equally for those attending monolingual programs. There are deep misgivings about some of the 'bush' schools now being run by untrained or semitrained aides in very remote 'outstations' for handfuls of Aboriginal children. In many respects Aboriginal education is still in a melting pot with an urgent need for clarity of goals and clear direction in policy.

It is significant that of the four recommendations contained in the chapter on education in the W.C.C. team report, the first focused on the need for changes in policy making procedures and urged that there be far greater

involvement of Aborigines in such processes (W.C.C., 1981:45-6). One of the assumptions underlying this paper is that policy making will be a crucial element for the future of Aboriginal education if inroads are to be made into overcoming some of the difficulties and uncertainties alluded to above.

Policy making is an obvious and critical component of education that can direct resources and human efforts in either constructive or disastrous directions. Freire is not often studied with respect to policy making. However, his ideas have a great deal that is both directly and indirectly relevant to situations where cultural misunderstanding and human frailty has reinforced the social divisions between rich and poor, powerful and powerless. It is argued that this is true especially of the disadvantaged and culturally misunderstood minorities such as the Australian Aborigines.

Implications of Freire's Theories for Policy Making

Introduction to Freire's Ideas

While many other thinkers have also been concerned with the role of education as a liberating force in society, Freire departs from most in —

- his concept of what constitutes a dehumanised society,
- his sociology of knowledge,
- his views on the teaching process, and
- the radical role he attributes to education as an instrument of social and political change. (Bacchus, 1980).

It is Freire's concern to achieve a restructuring of society through primarily educational processes rather than violent methods that makes his theories so appealing to groups such as Aborigines. They too are searching for methods of reform and democratisation to safeguard and further develop their own cultural identities and overcome the particular problems of oppression, injustice and disadvantage that so many of their people face.

Policies and policy making generally imply a desire for purposive courses of action for guidelines and decisions that point in some particular direction, and hopefully for some good reason. It is important therefore, to spend time considering the directions in which Freire believed the adoption of his policies and methods would take society. It is equally important to note how Freire analyses and interprets reality for most societies in this world and highlights the gap between his ideals and reality as he sees it. Finally, the particular educational processes and strategies that he believes can transform reality into a more humanised society, need to be clarified and their relevance for Aboriginal education policy making highlighted.

In order to understand Freire, readers need to be aware of five specific elements to his theories and a number of important inter-relationships that follow. These have been represented diagramatically in Fig. 1.

Freire argues that critical observation of most societies reveals a significant gap between his concept of humanised society (1) and the real life situation (2)

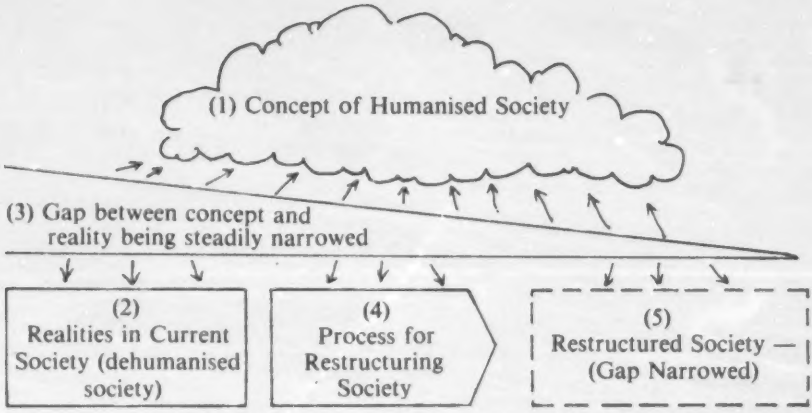
(1) Concept of Humanised Society
(3) Gap between concept and reality being steadily narrowed
(2) Realities in Current Society (dehumanised society)
(4) Process for Restructuring Society
(5) Restructured Society — (Gap Narrowed)

Fig. 1. Freire's View of the Restructuring of Society

being studied. His pedagogy is therefore directed towards narrowing the gap (3) and having men and women fulfilling their true destiny by becoming more fully human. His pedagogy of conscientization, praxis and dialogue (4) is thus the means for restructuring and reshaping the real world so that it conforms more closely with the ideals of truly humanised society (5).

The Concept of a Humanised Society

In his foreword to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Richard Shaull summarises Freire's perception of humanisation. A humanised person is one who becomes a subject (as distinct from an object) and "acts upon and transforms his world and in so doing moves towards ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively" (Freire, 1970b:12). However, without the freedom to act and transform a person's life situation, such a process of humanisation is not possible. Hence, humanisation and liberation are interdependent. In this notion, it cannot be assumed that a human is ever a finished product or has 'arrived'. On the contrary it affirms men and women as creatures who will always be found in the process of 'becoming' and who as unfinished persons will live in a similarly unfinished reality (Freire, 1970b:12). "The cardinal principle of that philosophy (Freire's) is man's vocation to be more — more, that is, than what he is at any given time or place. There are thus no developed men (sic) except in a biological sense". (Freire, 1970a:8-9).

The process of humanisation is also fundamentally social in nature. While humanisation must be achieved by each concerned individual, this is not possible without the help of others. ". . . while no one liberates himself by his own efforts alone, neither is he liberated by others" (Freire, 1970b:42). Hence the picture here is of individuals in close interaction with each other steadily transforming themselves, their society and their world as a result of their freedom to think critically and act critically both as individuals and social beings. The net result is of individuals and society becoming more fully human. Many Aborigines are experiencing the end result of government and mission policies that removed their freedom and right to "act upon" their

world. However the more enlightened Commonwealth and state government policies of self determination and self management have created an opportunity for Aborigines to significantly control many aspects of their future for the first time since European settlement.

Freire regards knowledge as much more than a body of facts. Knowledge he suggests must be viewed as a process which includes facts but much more. ". . . knowledge is always a process and results from the conscious actions (practice) of human beings on the objective reality which, in its turn conditions them" (Freire, 1978:89). He asserts that it is not possible to separate theory from practice, the act of knowing existing knowledge from the act of creating new knowledge, teaching from learning or educating from being educated.

In keeping with his views of human destiny, Freire regards education as the process which can liberate and humanise people and reconstruct society. One of the crucial functions of education is to take the unstructured and unsystematic knowledge and experiences of people and 'recreate' or reshape them into a structured form that becomes much more powerful and effective for their use (Freire, 1978:100). In this respect, Freire draws on the comment of Mao Tse-Tung, "You know I've proclaimed for a long time: we must teach the masses clearly what we have received from them confusedly" (Freire, 1970b:66 footnote). Humanised people then, become the creators of their own reality. They name their world in their own terms and from their own backgrounds and interpret their reality as they experience it. Decisions are their own, based on their own reflections and perceptions of events and situations. The role of education in all of this is crucial. It is the tool that ensures that the process above actually occurs.

Freire suggests that educationists and educational policy makers should provide answers to five fundamental questions —

- what to know?
- how to know?
- why to know?
- in benefit of what and of whom to know?
- against what and whom to know? (Freire, 1978:100-1).

In response to the first of these questions — what to know? — Freire is very clear that it is the subject's own reality that must be explored and understood. Consequently, how to know one's own reality is the crux of Freire's pedagogy. Transformation of their world — is Freire's answer to the third question "why to know?"

> The radical learner committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a 'circle of certainty', within which he also imprisons reality. On the contrary, the more radical he is, the more fully he enters into reality so that knowing it better, he can better transform it. (Freire, 1970b:18-19).

The benefit of knowledge, education and humanising forces should not be primarily for an individual's personal advancement but for individuals within

a community. Both are equally important. Education is againts the oppressive, dehumanising forces. It is fundamentally opposed to paternalism and bureaucracy.

Educators involved in Aboriginal programs have no doubt grappled with these same questions for many years. The author vividly recalls his first exposure to such issues at a seminar for W.A. teachers of Aboriginal students in January of 1960. However, the answers assumed or reached by those teachers in 1960 were far different from those suggested by Freire. According to Freire, they were essentially the answers of an oppressor, despite the praiseworthy intentions and motivation. One suspects that many of today's teachers of Aboriginal students may also lack the awareness and understanding of their role that Freire regards as crucial.

The Realities for Current Society

Freire argues that reality for the majority of the world's population is a dehumanising environment in which to live and work rather than a humanising one. In dehumanised society, Freire suggests that people fall into one of three categories —

- those who dominate — are oppressors
- those who are being dominated — are oppressed, and
- those who are learning to control and change their situation — are conscientised and liberated.

Freire considers that in the struggle for domination, oppressors establish and maintain their control through the general process of cultural invasion by which the oppressed are encouraged (and taught) to accept that they are ignorant, incompetent, irresponsible and not important. This process is further reinforced by such activities as 'labelling'. Labelling theories suggest that humans tend to label people and adjust their behaviour to whatever that particular label happens to be. It is claimed that the oppressed accept the labels and quickly become passive or act within the strict limits of the label that has been applied to them. This lays the basis by which economic and social exploitation, injustice and powerlessness can be perpetuated. The oppressed quickly become fatalistic, self deprecating and emotionally dependent upon the oppressors (Freire, 1970b:Chapt.1).

The oppressed (the product of such processes) are often characterised with 'adaptive' personalities, as opposed to what he terms an integrated personality, because:

- they have accepted and adapted to the reality determined by the oppressors,
- they have become submerged into the reality of the oppressors — decisions and perceptions are not their own but those of the oppressors, and
- they now even fear freedom and want the security of an ordered existence.

Table 1 provides a summary of many of the Freirean characteristics of the oppressed and oppressors.

Oppressed	Oppressors
• dominated by oppressors • exploited by oppressors • powerless • fatalistic and accepting of their circumstances, the 'will of God', passive • self deprecating, consider themselves lazy and unproductive, ignorant, no faith in themselves • emotionally dependent • submerged in 'culture of silence' • adaptive to values and mould of oppressors • treated as objects • lacking in confidence • feeling possessed or owned by the oppressors.	Oppressors maintain domination over the oppressed through: • exploitation • cultural and economic conquest and violence • divide and rule methods • manipulating • maintaining unjust social orders to their advantage • perpetuating myths to reinforce their authority • promoting false generosity that reinforces their position.

Table 1. Characteristics of People in Dehumanised Society: The Oppressed and Oppressors.

The issue relevant to this paper must be, to what extent is this Freirean analysis of society true of Aboriginal communities? Because of the wide diversity of situations within the Aboriginal population, a quick or generalised answer is not appropriate. But what can be said is that there are many Aboriginal communities in Australia where major policy making processes are dominated by outside staff, workers, government officials, academics, professionals and technicians, etc. of whom only the smallest number are Aborigines.

The Gap between the Concept of Humanised Society and the Reality of Dehumanised Society

Tables 2-5 provide both a summary of what has already been referred to in this paper and an indication of the nature of the gap mentioned in the first part of this section.

As the basis of humanised and dehumanised societies is outlined above, there would be few schools for Aboriginal students that could claim to be non-oppressive. Indeed one suspects that this may be all too true of the non-Aboriginal schools as well.

Processes for Restructuring Society: Conscientisation, Praxis, Dialogue and Leadership

How is the gap between the concept of humanised society and the reality of dehumanised society to be narrowed? Freire's strategy is to change the learner

Dehumanised	Humanised
• politically dead • unthinking in the relective-critical action sense • resistant to social change • accepting and encouraging prescription of roles, values etc. • having understanding of the physical world • mechanistic in their view of social change	• committed to the struggle for cultural revolution • politically conscious • see dialogue as important • see reflective action as vital • regard people as subjects and not as objects • welcome change and create their own culture and history • are integrated persons who are creators of their own reality (interpret reality as they experience it, make own decisions based on own reflections of reality and welcome freedom, autonomy and responsibility). • understand cultural and physical worlds • have faith in the ability of others to think and act • solve own problems • regard thought as the basis of culture • belong to themselves

Table 2. Comparison of Characteristics of People in Dehumanised Society with those in Humanised Society.

from a spectator to an actor. Freedom from oppressive and dehumanising circumstances cannot be given — it has to be achieved. Therefore people need to learn how to intervene in the reality in which they find themselves. This intervention process is called *praxis*. But before the process of praxis can be applied, people need to have gained an accurate understanding of their reality and dehumanising forces they must deal with. This is only possible through the prior process of *conscientisation*. Yet neither of these two tools of reform can function without human encounter in the form of *dialogue* which enables reflections and insights to be shared and explored. Nor can they be promoted without a special form of *leadership*.

Conscientisation: In the process of conscientisation the individual casts off the negative image of him/herself. It is important for them to discover that they are individuals who can do things: who can initiate change and significantly shape their own future and world. Their world is not a closed one but open to construction and change. The learner must discard the perceptions of reality which stem from the oppressor's view of society. The learner must begin to see the world, knowledge and his/her role in a new light. The

Table 3. Differences in Perception of Knowledge in Dehumanised and Humanised Societies

Dehumanised Society	Humanised Society
• culture imposed	• culture created
• perceptions of reality given by oppressors	• perceptions of reality are only valid when their own
• oppressors interpretations accepted unquestioningly	• create own interpretations of reality
• parameters of knowledge based on the world of oppressors — not oppressed	• parameters of knowledge determined by the immediate and real world of each individual
• world is named for the oppressed by the oppressors: words given to oppressed	• each individual names own world: creates words
• act of knowing is not accompanied by curiosity and questioning	• act of knowing only valid if accompanied by curiosity and questioning
• knowledge is complete in itself; can be absorbed — poured into empty vessels	• knowledge can only be understood in terms of the ends that it serves
• knowledge is to be accepted unthinkingly	• knowledge is discovered through critical reflection, dialogue and creative action.

Table 4. Characteristics of Adaptive and Integrated Education Systems for Dehumanised and Humanised Societies.

Dehumanised Society	Humanised Society
• education seen as cultural adaptation	• education seen as cultural action and animation: integrated
• education designed to domesticate	• education designed to liberate
• learner not important: they become mere spectators	• learner central: they are creators
• for the transfer of select knowledge	• learns from people and draws heavily on own reality, and experiences and curiosity
• students empty and need to be filled: banking approach	• students curious and interested: problem solving approach
• approach heavily narrational: teacher tells, explains, lectures, etc.	• approach emphasises creativity, dialogue, reflection and action.

emphasis on learning must be for the learner to discover his/her own liberation. Education for specifics such as for jobs is secondary to this. (Freire, 1974:25).

Praxis: Freire, on several occasions makes the comment that the difference he perceives between human beings and animals is that the former are

creatures of praxis. This is the term he uses to indicate the reflective, critical thinking capacity of humans and which can also identify possible action as a response to this reflecting process. But action also involves total commitment to the undertaking of that action. Still further, the type of action should be 'creative' or constructive action. Such 'reflection-action' processes should affect the original reality enabling the person to reassess through further reflection what additional action is necessary.

> At all stages of their liberation, the oppressed must see themselves as men (sic) engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human. Reflection and action become imperative . . . The insistence that the oppressed engage in reflection on their concrete situation is not a call to armchair revolution. On the contrary, reflection — true reflection — leads to action. On the other hand, when the situation calls for action, that action will constitute an authentic praxis only if its consequences become the object of critical reflection. (Freire, 1970b:41).

Freire goes on to warn that praxis is only possible if those responsible for the education program 'trust in the oppressed and in their ability to reason'. "Whoever lacks this trust will fail to bring about (or will abandon) dialogue, reflection and communication, and will fall into using slogans, communiques, monologues and instructions." (Freire, 1970b:41).

Dialogue: In chapter 3 of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Freire outlines his concept of dialogue. In dehumanised society, as indicated earlier, the oppressed people belong to a 'culture of silence', and are mute. They mouth the phrases and cliches of their oppressors but do not think for themselves. The explanations of what is happening to them and their world are the words and concepts of the oppressors. The people are unable to 'name the world' or express their personal perceptions of what is happening to them, interpreted from their own cultural viewpoint. Such people talk but do not dialogue. To Freire, dialogue represents an ability to communicate with a deep understanding of both one's own and the other's ability. 'Dialogical encounter with others' is the crucial underpinning of both the processes of conscientisation and praxis (Freire, 1970b:12). "Dialogue, as the encounter among men *(sic)* to 'name' the world, is a fundamental precondition for their true humanisation" (Freire, 1970b:107). Freire is fearful lest leaders and bureaucrats not discover or lose touch with the people's reality. To avoid this danger he therefore urges that they constantly be with the people and if possible live amongst them and share in and dialogue about their world firsthand.

Applying these three concepts of conscientisation, praxis and dialogue to Aboriginal education, it is obvious that from the Freirean standpoint there is a very special need for policy makers to become partners with Aboriginal people. Both parties should be interdependent upon each other in order to understand the realities of both the Aboriginal and bureaucratic worlds in which they must coexist. However, until very recently there were virtually no structures where dialogue for this purpose was possible.

Leadership in Dehumanised and Humanised Societies: Policy making, planning and administration are vital functions in any society. Freire accepts

this but points out that just as education can be a dehumanising agent when controlled by oppressors, so too leadership has a similar potential as a tool for liberation or as a force for dehumanisation.

In the sense that policy making involves defining purposive courses of action to be followed by society or parts of society, the Freirean viewpoint is that individuals most involved must assume a major responsibility for the development of those policies that affect their own lives and education. This is done by the policy maker and learner working and talking together. This is not true of dehumanised society where the aim of education is to transmit a prescribed body of knowledge and specific cultural outlook. For such a purpose, centralised policy making by small elites if both suitable and efficient.

Policy and planning in a humanised society must be localised and ideally involve each participant of the program but at the same time, be open to the contribution that outsiders have to offer through dialogue and reflecting together. Freire attacks the role of centralised bureaucracies arguing that they deny opportunity for creativity and true cultural activity. They tend to transform people into those who merely 'parrot' cliches and ideas and who become "alienated adherents of daily routine" (Freire, 1978:12). Leaders should not be out in front or behind but with the people (Freire, 1978:18).

Freire advocated centres being established for reflective thought which could have as their major goal — to assist local people to think about practices in agriculture, health, productivity, etc. which need to be improved (Freire, 1978:25). These culture circles were to assume an important policy and planning role in relation to the running of their village, productivity and education. Freire also talks of the whole village unit being conceived as one large culture circle for similar purposes (Freire, 1978:133-4). However, Freire did not want to imply a state of semi-anarchy in policy and planning. He strongly advocated having a 'plan for society'. He pleads for coherent and specific objectives in a number of areas such as economic and social organisation, internal distribution as well as external trade, communication and transport, culture, health and education.

Table 5 highlights a number of the contrasting qualities of policy makers, planners, administrators and other forms of leadership in dehumanised and humanised societies as perceived by Freire.

It is doubtful whether there is any sector of Aboriginal education where the seven aspects of 'humanised' leadership roles set out in Table 5 have been seriously addressed by educational authorities for any length of time. Freire would argue that here lies the basic reason for the relatively limited achievements in Aboriginal education as indicated in the introduction of this chapter.

Implications of Freire's Theories for Aboriginal Education

The crucial question for Australian educators must be — how valid is Freire's explanation of dehumanised society for the Australian situation? The

Dehumanised Society	Humanised Society
• leaders do the thinking for others • educational plans are created independent of society's plans or local thinking • no participation with the people • administration separated from the people and bureaucracy • people not given the opportunity, power or resources to run projects themselves • leadership depends heavily on the contrivances of bureaucracy • leadership is authoritative and elitist	• each individual required to think with others • educational plans in harmony with plan of society • participation by all through culture circles and other dialogical means • administration is with the people and marked by dialogue and reflection • opportunity for people to run own projects considered essential • leadership continually avoids and challenges the establishment of bureaucracy • leadership is collegial and identified with the people

Table 5. Characteristics of Planners, Policy Makers, Administrators and other forms of Leadership in Dehumanised and Humanised Societies.

Poverty Commission's reports leave little doubt that there is significant poverty and socio-economic disadvantage being experienced by many sectors of the Australian population of whom Aborigines rate as one of the most seriously affected groups. It is also true that Aborigines are not powerful or vocal and have not attained any significant role in the education of their people although there have been some moves in this direction during the past few years. It is not too difficult to make out a case that suggests that the general Australian attitudes of government and teachers are essentially 'oppressor' by nature and that the education approach is basically the 'banking' methodology that Freire describes in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970b:46-7). For instance, to what extent can it be said of Aboriginal education that:

- for the most part, teachers do the teaching and students are taught — the local community and students have little or no teaching role or opportunities to contribute;
- the prevailing attitude is that teachers understand what is most needful for Aborigines and that the Aboriginal community by and large lacks this understanding;
- the focus of the teachers' reflections is upon the needs of the Aboriginal child and omits their own needs and inadequacies and the urgency for teachers to become learners of the culture and Aboriginal world in which they have to operate;
- students do not talk very much — are shy and reluctant to share their experiences, insights or feelings believing that these are of little significance or help;

- the teachers determine the rules and administer the discipline — students and the community have little say or role to play;
- teachers choose the program content for the school and students adapt to it;
- teachers tend to become the creative, thinking subjects in the learning process while pupils are regarded as mere objects?

It is therefore argued that Aboriginal students young and old, are not being viewed as people whose critical consciousness should be developed through their constant intervention in their world. Nor are Aboriginal students apparently seen as persons who are to become transformers of their part of the world. It was probably against this that the following comments by a Queensland Aboriginal teacher aide were directed when she wrote in a manual prepared for new teachers appointed to Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal schools:

> I do hope the principal and teachers and other people who come to work in our community will look on this manual as a guide to them and be ready to accept the aides' advice and listen to what we have to tell them. Because I think it's no longer the teachers' turn to teach now in Aboriginal communities: it's the aides' turn. We should teach the new staff the local things that the children and their parents want them to do (QAITAD, 1978:2).

In view of the marked differences between Aboriginal and European culture and the determination of many Aboriginal communities to maintain a distinctive identity, Freire's philosophy is therefore very attractive. It encourages Aborigines (and indeed applies equally to any other cultural minority) to:

- deal critically with their own 'world' and progressively transform it,
- seek to understand their own situation and reality and use this as the parameters of knowledge for their people, and
- use education in its valid form as the major tool for reshaping their own world.

At the same time, it requires teachers of Aborigines as their starting point for their work to:

- seek to understand the world and aspirations of the Aborigines they are teaching by first becoming a learner themselves,
- be committed to the restructuring of the Aboriginal world will in company with Aborigines, oppose the forces of paternalism, exploitation and manipulation,
- develop educational policies and strategies that have been hammered out through total involvement and dialogue with the Aborigines themselves, and
- use dialogue with the Aboriginal people as the key to achieving all of the above.

The above approach is in direct contrast to the relatively centralised systems' apparent in each of the states that tend to vest responsibility for policy and planning functions in centralised bodies or appointees such as superintendents of Aboriginal education, directors of special education or in principals of schools.[2]

A Project Relevant to Aboriginal Education Policy Making based on Freirean principles: The Aboriginal Consultative Group to the Schools Commission

A Brief History of the Project

One of the most significant Schools Commission initiatives in Aboriginal education was the establishment of an Aboriginal Consultative Group (A.C.G.), initially for a three month period, but later extended to two years. A group of eighteen Aborigines met first in December 1974 to prepare a brief report for the Commission on their perceptions of Aboriginal education. This quickly extended into a number of small projects and activities of which the most significant are mentioned below. The appointees to the Group had been nominated by the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee and were drawn from every state and the Northern Territory. Approximately half had some form of tertiary training although only two or three had had any involvement in national policy making. Four of the members were from tribally orientated communities.

The A.C.G.'s first major task was to prepare an interim report for the Schools Commission, *Education for Aborigines* (1975) which included guidelines and recommendations concerning all aspects of Aboriginal education. The recommendations contained in the report generally focused on the involvement and participation of Aborigines in developing policies and programs which affect the education of Aborigines.

The A.C.G. used its June report as the basis for discussions with the key officers for Aboriginal education from each State and the Northern Territory. These discussions were followed with a similar meeting the following year. The A.C.G. also arranged a number of discussions with each of the heads of Commonwealth Education Departments or Commissions involved with Aboriginal education to explore relevant avenues of further involvement. One of the results of these discussions was the approach to the Technical and Further Education Commission (TAFEC) outlined later in this paper.

In August 1975, the A.C.G. undertook an investigation of the educational needs of selected groups of Aborigines in the Kimberleys area of Western Australia. During the first week the team visited Aboriginal communities near Derby. In the second week four delegates from each community came to Derby for a week's conference. This was the first of several efforts to gather field data and become better acquainted with community concerns and situations.

In 1975 the A.C.G. approached TAFEC requesting that funds be made available for a study to determine the real factors associated with the

disadvantages suffered by Aborigines in post-compulsory schooling. The A.C.G. undertook to:

- investigate the extent to which current TAFE resources meet Aboriginal needs in the field of adult education and the extent to which these resources and opportunities are used by Aborigines;
- identify factors that inhibit Aboriginal involvement in and utilisation of TAFE programs; and
- present specific recommendations to TAFEC on the above issues in terms of policies and programs.

The findings and recommendations from this investigation were presented to TAFEC in July 1976.

The A.C.G. took the initiative in attempting to set up a special vacation-work project for Aborigines with a scheme designed for tertiary graduates or tertiary students interested in or qualified for educational research. The A.C.G. was concerned about the need for training and the lack of opportunity for young educated Aborigines to acquire skills and experience, and it was hoped that trainees would gain experience in research or policy work in Aboriginal education. Because of limited funds it proved possible for only one person to be involved, but the venture nevertheless was considered to be successful.

There was also a steady call on members of the A.C.G. to participate in a wide range of activities and committees as representatives of the A.C.G. or 'Aboriginal Voice' in education. This proved useful in focusing attention on Aboriginal perceptions of and aspirations for education. However, the A.C.G. believed that its most significant contribution was in negotiating a set of guidelines for the establishment of a National Aboriginal Education Committee (N.A.E.C.) to advise the federal Minister for Education. This body was appointed soon after and the first meeting held in April 1977 by which time the A.C.G. was disbanded.

Specific Freirean Approaches Adopted in the Project

Creating Opportunities for Dialogue: The project was intended to promote extensive dialogue among the participants as well as among other Aborigines and non Aborigines. As indicated earlier, the A.C.G. was restricted to a body of eighteen members and the Aboriginal Teacher Aide workshop to twenty-five participants. Even so these groups often proved too large for effective dialogue and so the two bodies frequently operated in small working groups. Size of working groups was obviously crucial. For instance, with eighteen members this averaged out at approximately three minutes talking each per hour or approximately thirty minutes each per full day. In order to increase the opportunity for dialogue the project not only adopted small group approaches but also lengthened the day by holding regular evening sessions.

As described in the preceding section, the A.C.G. also sought funding from the Schools Commission to enable a small number from the Group to

undertake further discussions and workshops in the Kimberleys of Western Australia. The A.C.G. felt that as an advisory body, there were so few of their members who had a reliable grasp of the tribal people's orientation, that they should seek an opportunity for dialogue directly with them. This would allow them to confirm or reshape the recommendations in their report to accommodate the special needs and aspirations of such communities. Thus a series of visits to several West Kimberley communities was arranged. At each centre there were specially organised community meetings for local Aborigines to talk through the appropriateness of the recommendations for that particular community. These visits were followed by a workshop mounted in a central location (Derby) and attended by small delegations from each of the communities visited to continue the discussions on education that had been commenced the previous week.

But the more significant move was the attempt to establish effective dialogue between Aborigines and non-Aborigines. In the case of the A.C.G., the range of non-Aborigines contacted was quite extensive.

Over two years the A.C.G. organised discussions with non-Aboriginal bodies and persons such as:

- the Schools Commissioners and secretariat
- the State Superintendents of Aboriginal education
- the heads of a number of Commonwealth Departments and Commissions
- politicians, and
- a number of academics.

Initial contacts in several instances led to a series of continuing discussions with some of the above bodies.

In establishing dialogue with non Aboriginal officials it was found that to have worked out points of concern and possible strategies for change in policy and administration beforehand was crucial. The discussion of issues laid out in a well-presented report that gave background to the point of concern, outlined the changes desired and recommended strategies for achieving these goals, was outstandingly successful. By presenting their reports and recommendations as a starter to dialogue, it was found that the non-Aborigines present were automatically placed into a listening role. This appeared to be a useful approach. While many of the dialogues that ensued did not appear to be of the significance or depth that Freire would be looking for, frequent comments after such meetings indicated that there had been invaluable learning exchanges.

Creating Opportunities for Critical Thought (Reflection): The terms of reference for the project were deliberately broad which proved helpful. The A.C.G. was requested to present their viewpoint on —

- the present policies and educational provisions in respect to Aborigines
- present patterns of administering funds for the education of Aborigines, and

- specific matters the A.C.G. felt were of importance to Aboriginal education.

They were to hold an initial three day meeting in which they conferred by themselves, followed by a gap of two months to allow time for reflection and discussion in their local communities. A further three day meeting resulted in a draft document which they used as the basis of their first official discussions with the Schools Commission. Several months later they met with the State Superintendents of Aboriginal education and worked through the draft once more. Later they met with the heads of relevant Commonwealth Government departments and commissions. These proved invaluable as aids to their own reflection on the issues under consideration. As a result of six months of such opportunities for regular discussion and thought, the A.C.G. was able to finalise its first publication — *Education for Aborigines,* June 1975. This document represented the first comprehensive statement on Aboriginal education in Australia to be written solely by Aborigines. The thoughtfulness and comprehensiveness of their recommendations suggested that this would prove to be a most significant document and that the process followed had been especially valuable.

There is no way of assessing whether one approach to developing a policy document was superior to the other. Certainly spacing the process over a six month period as happened with the A.C.G. and building in repeated opportunities for reflection about the same issues had obvious advantages. The growth in professionalism and confidence of the Aboriginal participants was most noticeable. The development and refining of their ideas was also an exciting outcome.

One observation about this project was that no significant input of ideas from outside the group itself was essential. Even the limited or absence of any academic training of the participants did not prove a barrier to the preparation of policy guidelines in a particularly fine report.

Creating Opportunities for Transforming Action — the Outcomes of Praxis: Possibly the most striking aspect of the A.C.G. was the range of activities that were undertaken as a result of the Group's initiative. Initially it had only the one task to undertake — the report for the Schools Commission. However, when this had been finalised and the Group was to be disbanded, the members approached the Commission pointing out that while their original assignment was completed, in fact this experience of meeting and reflecting upon the educational issues had raised many more questions than answers and they were anxious to be able to continue as a group in the hope of working through some of what they saw as 'unfinished business'. The Commission's response was both immediate and positive. As a result the group continued to meet and work for a further two years. During this period the group was given no guidelines or specific terms of reference to observe, it had no officially appointed chairperson and no specific responsibilities other than what they themselves determined. Their undertakings (previously outlined) were as varied as they were impressive. The ability of the A.C.G. to actively develop and pursue their own agenda depended heavily upon the empathy and support received from the Schools Commission as well as individual members of staff

in the various State and Commonwealth Departments. The Commission provided, whenever possible, resources in personnel and finance and continued to encourage the group to expand its interests and respond to the issues it identified with 'transforming action'.

At the same time the Commission enabled the educational 'voice of the Aborigines' to be heard. It published their reports and created several opportunities where the Group had a platform from which they could be both heard and seen. For instance, the Commission organised the first meeting between the state superintendents of Aboriginal education and the A.C.G.

Summary

This project was very successful in terms of the immediate aim to establish an Aboriginal 'voice' in education that would be listened to through valid dialogue. This not only led to the establishment of the National Aboriginal Education Committee but to the establishment of similar groups in each of the states. The methods of establishing meaningful dialogue with administrators and policy makers piloted in this project have now been adopted and used frequently by the National Aboriginal Education Committee and a number of the state consultative groups with varying success.

The lack of academic or professional training among Aborigines did not appear to be factors that adversely affected policy making. Aborigines with limited backgrounds in these two areas were able to relate most effectively to educational administrators and academics through dialogue. In such situations it appeared that the most crucial factor was the non-Aboriginal background and attitudes that enabled the latter group to hear and empathise with the Aboriginal people.

The reflective approach with critical thought and dialogue appeared to be more than adequate as a means for identifying and determining policy. Reliance on experts was not considered and required. The perceptions and insights that Aborigines offered had a validity and genuineness of their own. The deep sense of achievement and satisfaction by the A.C.G. arising from running their own research program and activities was most noticeable. Finally, dialogue, critical thought and transforming action each played a vital part in the underpinning philosophy of the project and proved to be practical and fruitful as an approach to policy making and development.

Some Final Comments

The degree to which Freire can be considered as a relevant interpreter of the Aboriginal society's current trauma and conflict in the Australian context is not at all clear. His analysis and explanation of society and especially of the powerless and exploited groups is appealing because it offers hope and suggests a non-violent remedy based essentially on the power of education. The potential contribution of Freire and his relevance to the need for Aborigines to find directions should not be discounted too quickly. However, his choice of language is disturbing to many Aborigines and non-Aborigines. His use of terms such as 'oppressed', 'liberation', 'cultural revolution', 'class

suicide' etc. suggest an approach that is radical, prone to violence or anarchy and inappropriate in a conservative nation such as Australia. How true this assessment might be is a crucial question still to be pronounced upon by educators and history itself. However, Freire's unashamed confidence in the ability of education to be a major tool in humanising society and provide the cutting edge for other reforms, is a breath of fresh air for a sector of education where to date, the rewards and achievements have been very minimal for Aboriginal students.

Policy making presumes that decision makers have some sense of direction for the society they serve and its (re)construction. Freire requires that as the starting point of all society, such directions and goals be addressed by bureaucracy and members of that society interacting with each other in constant dialogue. Clarification may not be achieved in the first instance but this process should be ongoing and constantly evolving. His insistence on this process provides a timely challenge to those working in Aboriginal policy. There is no firm evidence that this has been a widely accepted basis for Aboriginal policy making.

The notion that education cannot be neutral but is a highly political tool, raises yet another issue. Is this true in the general social context of Aboriginal life and specifically in the field of education of Aborigines? To what extent has schooling been a 'domesticating' tool for government authorities in the past? To what extent is it still a subversive 'benefit' in terms of self determination and culture?

Many educators may well feel that Freire when all is said and done is only suggesting what is already well appreciated by authorities — 'listen and learn from the people, consult constantly and involve the local community as far as possible in the decision making processes'. There is certainly an element of truth in this view. However, he has gone much further than this. He has provided a theoretical framework that makes such an approach not merely a desirable extra but the heart and core of developing policy and strategies of change for disadvantaged groups such as Aborigines. In addition, he offers an invaluable and eminently practical starting point for appraising current Aboriginal educational and related policies.

Notes

1. The contribution and historical necessity of centralized control of state education is fully acknowledged. Such policies guaranteed continuity of staffing, supplies, syllabuses etc.

2. Recent moves by State education departments to establish Aboriginal Consultative Groups, appoint Aboriginal staff to special headquarters positions, the training of Aboriginal teachers and aides are acknowledged as positive developments in this area.

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POLITICAL INFLUENCES BEHIND THE DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WYNDHAM REPORT IN NEW SOUTH WALES

KEVIN R. SMITH

Introduction

On 31 October 1961, the Hon. Ernest Wetherell, Minister for Education in New South Wales, sought leave of the Legislative Assembly to bring down a bill to make certain provisions in respect of secondary education: to constitute a Secondary Schools Board and a Board of Senior School Studies, and to provide for the granting of School and Higher School Certificates. Thirty days later, on 30 November 1961, the Governor of the State signed the new legislation, to come into effect on 30 January 1962.

Behind these formalities lay a fascinating story of the birth, growth, stressful adolescence and eventual maturity of a public policy in education. This paper identifies and describes the influences contributing to certain aspects of the political moves which resulted ultimately in the New South Wales Education Act, No. 47 of 1961, which has been described as the most radical and interesting new development in Australian education up to that time.

The Education Act of 1961 permitted the implementation of the Wyndham Report[1], the basic recommendations of which can be traced back to the Wallace Report of 1933.[2] Through the two decades to the 30's and the 40's, especially due to the interest of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, the Board of Secondary School Studies and the New Education Fellowship, professional demands for the implementation of the Wallace recommendation for an external School Certificate examination at the end of the fourth secondary year had constantly recurred.

In 1953, virtually simultaneously, an enthusiastic, newly-appointed Director-General of Education and a Teachers' Federation aroused to fury over a sudden return to a partially-external Intermediate Certificate examination were the catalytic forces that brought about an enquiry into secondary education in New South Wales. The essential initiative however, was the Director-General's and it was propounded as a fresh approach without reference to the events, or non-events, of the previous two decades. The Director-General related his proposal to ramifications of the growth of the post-war secondary school population. The committee of enquiry, chaired by Dr. H.S. Wyndham, the Director-General, held its first meeting on 14 April, 1954. The final meeting of the committee took place on 28 October, 1957. During that period of somewhat over three years there were 57 public hearings of evidence, 4 private hearings and 35 sessions in committee.

The Report and Its Public Release

On 20 November, 1957 the Report of the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales was tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the Minister for Education, R.J. Heffron. Press, radio and the

new television gave the Report unprecedented coverage, and the Report was widely welcomed. The most fascinating newspaper report was a feature article by Francis James who suggested, *inter alia:* ". . . it is quite obvious from the internal evidence that the writing must have been one man's work . . . (and he) obviously intended the general public to read it."[3] That man, of course, was Harold Wyndham, the Director-General.

The Minister, R.J. Heffron, gained two tactical advantages which ensured the widest publicity for, and discussion of, the survey. The Minister tabled the Report publicly in the Legislative Assembly and thus sidestepped the dusty pigeonholes of the Cabinet Room. Furthermore, the Government Printer had been persuaded by Wyndham, without reference to the Minister, to publish the Report in a format that lent itself to later reprinting for the public as an octavo-size book, rather than in the double-column foolscap format usually used in the Parliament for such reports. Both the Minister and his Director-General were well aware of obstructive forces waiting in the wings.

A permanent head of an Australian state government department has the joint task of being chief official adviser to his Minister and general manager of the department. It is not part of his normative role to be a publicist.

> The public servant is trained to think of himself as working out of the limelight and anonymously to put into effect policies ultimately decided by his political masters on which he may have offered advice . . .[4]

Civil service ethics dictate thus that no officer should embarrass his Minister. Wyndham was to distinguish carefully between those times he acted as Chairman of the Committee which had prepared a significant report and those times he acted as Director-General. Not all observers of events subsequent to 1957 were willing to make that same distinction.

Wyndham had revealed early a flair for good departmental public relations. He had, for example, selected the first Public Relations Officer of the New South Wales Education Department, C.E. Rubie, in 1950, and had constantly given him encouraging support. The two men worked well together. Another instance of Wyndham's desire to present his Department's work favourably to the public is seen in his initiation of Education Week in New South Wales.

It was Rubie who made the decision to speak of the *Wyndham Committee* as such because he tired of its long official title. His touch was sure, and increasingly Wyndham's name came to the fore, especially as the Wyndham Report itself raised so many side issues that kept it before the public. Press releases and briefing materials were prepared by Rubie several times during the three years following the tabling of the Report. While such procedures and activities might normally be expected from a major government department in relation to a major recommendation to its Minister, such was not the case and is still often not the case in Australia. Bassett, in his own examination of the planning of the Wyndham Scheme, has stated that it arose out of ". . . probably the best example on the Australian scene of a major act of policy determination which, although initiated and implemented by the administration, was widely based publicly and politically."[5]

Wyndham, of all people, knew his history of public education in New South Wales. He knew that, with the exception of Peter Board, neither permanent nor political heads in education had a record of taking the lead in stimulating wide public discussion on matters of educational policy. He knew also that the imaginative, strategy-oriented staff expert is rare at all levels of government. Wyndham was just such a man, and furthermore he was tenacious. He was determined that the scheme would be implemented.

His thinking greatly influenced by the white paper and public discussion which had preceded England's 1944 Education Act, Wyndham wanted his committee's Report widely discussed throughout New South Wales. He was tireless in his efforts at the 1958 conference of the Institute of Inspectors of Schools, seeking to inform, energise and inspire his senior Departmental officers.

During discussion relating to whether teachers would accept such a new concept of secondary education, Wyndham was provoked to discourse at length. His adamant assertion was that the question was not 'whether' but 'how', and somewhat later his emotive exhortations were quite Garibaldian and visionary:

> Our day's march may be long; it is certain to be strenuous. We may not now know the details of our path, but we must be convinced that we will arrive. We know that our path is not mapped for us in detail; indeed, the barest outlines have been sketched. We cannot, then, expect to find, at any stage of the journey, a paved road awaiting us. But in the absence of a road, we must be prepared, in the early stages, to use — or to make — a bridle track. What we do know is that we must march and not refuse to move because a way is not clearly ready for us.[6]

Wyndham appreciated that discussion was an important feature of modern democratic government, and that education authorities were obliged to provide bases for public discussion from which the education of children might benefit. Meetings of parents throughout the State were able to hear about the Report from Wyndham himself as he travelled continually from town to town. In his many top-level, informal contacts in the city of Sydney he keenly advocated the virtues of his committee's Report: "Over a drink or whenever opportunity arose I tried to persuade politicians on both sides of the House about the need for implementatoin."[7]

The year of Sputnik, 1958, was a year for dissemination and public discussion. It was also a year for obstructive forces to begin quietly their moves aimed at blocking implementation.

Adoption of the Report by Government

The implications of the Report affected schools outside of the Education Department and so legislation was essential if they were to be involved in the proposed reforms of secondary education. The Labor Government's Cabinet therefore, in 1958, referred the matter to Caucus which passed it then to its own education sub-committee for report and recommendations. This sub-committee was responsible over the next three years for several political delays

that led to frequent accusations of the 'shelving' or 'pigeonholing' of implementation. Essentially the opposition to the Wyndham Scheme kept coming back within the sub-committee to alleged financial difficulties:

> The Caucus sub-committee saw the Wyndham Scheme as placing an unbearable financial strain on parents, and sacrificing the interests of the average child to those of the academically inclined.[8]

> Caucus recalcitrants were mainly members from the industrial areas, aware of apprenticeship problems and of the need for assistance to parents.[9]

Concern over finance was widespread. There is evidence attesting to the primacy of financial and staffing considerations in causing Cabinet itself at first to accept tolerantly and placidly the sub-committee delays. The Premier and his ministers were terrified of the State committing itself to the soaring costs of another Opera House. Public Service Board Chairman Wurth is reputed to have warned the Minister for Education in 1960 that staff and finance were lacking for immediate implementation.[10]

Costing of the proposed Wyndham Scheme was carried out within both Treasury and the Education Department. Wyndham was nevertheless perceived to have ". . . played down the costs implications of the scheme."[11] Perhaps this perception arose out of a confusion regarding his role as Chairman *vis a vis* that as Director-General. Beeby, an international authority on educational planning, reminds us that:

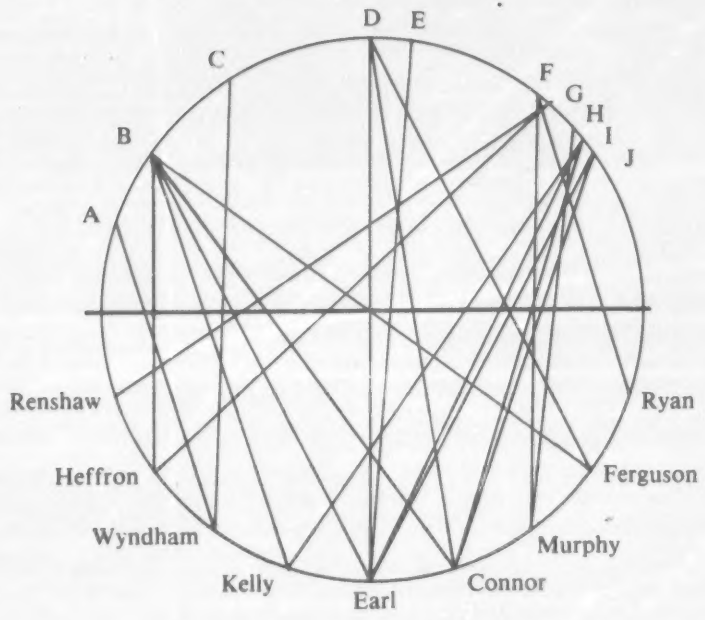
> A common procedure has been for an education commission to draw up sweeping recommendations for reform within its terms of reference, and then either to present them to the government uncosted or to sketch out a generalised estimate of costs after the recommendations on policy have been decided.[12]

In this case costing was a matter quite clearly not under reference to the Committee.

Influential Personalities

As part of the research procedures contributing to the broader study[13] of which this paper is but one strand, a number of interviews were conducted with persons earlier identified as knowledgeable regarding aspects of the events behind, and leading up to, the implementation of the Wyndham Scheme. Figures 1 and 2 summarise some of the findings from these reputational-decisional interviews. Based on a technique used by Hunter[14] the upper half of the figure shows those interviewed, while the lower half shows persons identified as being influential in relation to a particular issue. Later documentary research considerably supplemented and supported these interviews.

Evidence relating to persons influential in contributing to the delay in implementing the Wyndham Report was not easy to obtain. Informants were especially guarded on this issue while some persons interviewed were quite lacking awareness. However, apart from the nomination of Wyndham, all persons named were members of the Parliament, with Earl and Connor credited with influence somewhat more strongly than the others. The



A — Committee Member
B — Officer of Education Department
C — Officer of Education Department
D — Officer of Teachers Federation
E — Officer of Teachers Federation
F — Member of Government
G — Member of Cabinet
H — Member of Cabinet
I — Member of Caucus Sub-Committee
J — Member of Caucus Sub-Committee

Fig. 1. Influential Persons Relevant to the 1968-1961 Delay.

recalcitrant members of the delaying sub-committee of Caucus are identified in Figure 1.[13] It was a sub-committee of seven, with Heffron as chairman. The sub-committee members represented industrial electorates. Although other motivations were to become also apparent, their concern for family expenses emerges clearly as a major and genuine motivation for opposition to the new Wyndham proposals for an additional fourth year of schooling. They opposed the abolition of the Intermediate Certificate examination which had traditionally given access to public service employment for the sons of working class parents. Earl, a former teacher, was a most influential opponent, although a relative newcomer to Parliament. Kelly was reputed leader of the recalcitrants and, like Ferguson especially, argued against the new scheme on political grounds related to the needs and opinions of the working class parents of his electorate. Within the sub-committee the recalcitrants had undisputed voting strength.

A New Minister

Yet another reason for delay in the implementation of the Wyndham scheme relates to Heffron's aspirations. To a considerable extent the viability of the Report rested with the initiatives of the Minister for Education. There were those, including the Director-General, who were convinced that the Report lay on the shelf because Heffron did not wish to 'rock the boat'. There is little doubt that Heffron favoured the new scheme, but being aware of the immense financial, logistic, administrative and political problems involved, he would appear to have soft-pedalled the whole issue so as not to jeopardise his own political future. In political terms his caution was both understandable and legitimate. Twice he had narrowly missed gaining the Premiership. He had become Deputy Premier in 1952. He wished to maintain the goodwill of both major factions within Caucus in his pursuit of the Premiership.

In 1952 the Labor Party leadership in New South Wales had been won substantially by the political right wing. Because of Premier Cahill's personal friendship with Cardinal Gilroy there was an especially closee relationship between the Catholic Church and the Labor Government during the politically tumultuous mid-50's. The worst effects of the catastrophic Australia-wide 'split' of 1954-55 in the Labor Party were avoided in New South Wales and the government was able to present a front of moderation to the general public. Nevertheless, passions had run high and the factions of the 'split' were still there in the Caucus, even though Cahill had been highly successful in maintaining an outwardly united front. There were possibly six to ten left-wing rebels in the Caucus, of whom Connor had been especially prominent at the time of the split.[16] These members were well represented on the Education sub-committee. The political style of the rebels was said to be to some extent marked by two patterns of behaviour:

> Individuals excluded from positions of power seize upon issues which may lead them to power.[17]

> Tending to express the resentments of the Australian working man, they indulged in bombast in favor of the poor and down-trodden and bombast in Caucus meetings against the established leadership of the Labor movement.[18]

The balance was such that Heffron did not intend to upset it.

Late in October, 1959, Premier Cahill died while in office. He was automatically succeeded by Heffron, the Deputy Premier. Heffron's leadership was, within a week, given affirmation through election by his parliamentary colleagues. He retained his Education portfolio until May, 1960, when he relinquished it to W. Wetherell.

Wetherell had been brought up in the mining community of Mount Lyell in Tasmania, and had later worked on the Ballarat goldfields. In 1911 he went to Broken Hill where he became a union leader. In 1916, in New Zealand raising strike funds, he began a friendship with another Australian union official, R.J. Heffron. Wetherell later led Broken Hill miners in their 1919 strike. Shortly before 1919, D.A. Taylor, later to become President of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation had worked in the Broken Hill mines. Vince

Durick, to whom reference will be made later, had been born and went to school in Broken Hill. This intriguing web of personal associations gave Wetherell an exceptional tactical advantage in the events that lay ahead.

Wetherell was elected in 1949 to the Legislative Assembly as member for Cobar. Representing such a strong Labor electorate he was never in danger of losing an election to opposing parties. He was an apt choice for the critical Education portfolio, and was appointed by Heffron on the specific understanding that he implement the Wyndham Scheme.[19] The new Minister for Education had a unique personal status in Caucus both because he represented Broken Hill and because of his personal qualities: humble yet determined, shrewd but honest. He owed allegiance to no political clique. Four members of his family were practising teachers. As one of the few non-Catholics in Cabinet his appointment preserved the tradition of a non-Catholic Minister for Education. Without a doubt, there had entered onto the scene a significant new participant in the Director-General's struggles to achieve implementation of the recommendations of the Wyndham Report. Having again read the Report, Wetherell became familiar with it, understood it, and wanted it adopted.

Wetherell took the initiative. He was not fettered by the inhibitions that had prevented Heffron from acting. Within a few days of taking office he announced that legislation to implement the Wyndham scheme would be passed in the coming Parliamentary session.[20] A compromise towards meeting the stated objectives of the Caucus recalcitrants was the proposed retention of the Intermediate Certificate examination.

Wetherell established close personal contacts with Wyndham and Stephens, the Director of Secondary Education, to ensure their mutual understanding of all facets of the Report and to explore all possible tactics that might permit its implementation. On one occasion Wyndham was called upon by Wetherell to meet for a two-and-a-half hour briefing session with himself, the Premier, members of the A.L.P. Education Committee and the Caucus sub-committee in an attempt to ensure full understanding by all parties of the intentions of the Report and of the situation in schools.

Caucus Delays

The Caucus sub-committee still refused to bring forward to Caucus a recommendation supporting the scheme. By October 1960, the major objection had been switched to the proposed sixth secondary year being burdensome upon parents.[21] On the part of the recalcitrants there was resentment against Wyndham sending his ". . . educational minions throughout the length and breadth of New South Wales" selling his scheme to the people while the Government was still in a state of indecision, and being permitted to do so by both a ". . . benign Minister and Premier". The intransigent members of the Labor Government were beginning to feel the build up of a public opinion that Caucus was needlessly delaying a wonderful new scheme. Nevertheless obstruction continued. Consequently, when in October 1960, Wetherell had to announce that the Wyndham scheme could

not be implemented in 1961, the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, led by D.A. Taylor ". . . went to work behind the scenes to improve the chances of the Report, in co-operation with Wetherell."[22]

There had been several earlier Federation deputations to the Minister and informal conversations, but the Federation's effort now held greater urgency. Wetherell himself was willing to move with increased determination. Both he and senior officers of the Federation saw the Education Committee of the State A.L.P. as being able to bring usefully favourable recommendations to the State A.L.P. Conference in 1961. The Minister had decided to have Conference over-ride Caucus.

1961 A.L.P. Conference Decision

Taylor made a point of taking to lunch at the Teachers' Club, J.P. Ducker, influential organiser for the State Labor Council. He presented to Ducker a copy of the Wyndham Report and talked about it over lunch, emphasising its democratic approach to secondary education from which the children of workers would benefit. Taylor's role, inextricably intertwined with the activities of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, acting as a body representative of teacher opinion, was significant in thus mobilising and unifying friends of the proposed new scheme. Many of his efforts were directed towards a strategy of reinforcement through the columns of *Education,* the journal of the Teachers' Federation. During this period of energetic manoeuvring, senior officers of the Teachers' Federation conferred privately with E.S. Ryan, chairman of the State A.L.P. Education Committee, who was also a member of the Federation. Ryan was thoroughly briefed regarding Federation's support of the Report and was to prove greatly influential in the subsequent decisions of his committee. Wetherell, Taylor and Wyndham worked to arouse public interest, to mobilise and unify supporters, and to destroy the opposition of the obstructionists.

In February 1961, Wyndham, fully aware of events going on behind the scenes, took his ongoing formal planning one step further. He told Stephens, *inter alia:*

> On the assumption that Cabinet may approve at least the general recommendations of the secondary education report, it can be anticipated — (i) that approval will be given at short notice, (ii) some time will elapse before the necessary legislation can be passed and the statutory bodies established. Yet if any decision is made there will be a demand to institute any new procedures in 1962.[23]

In his memorandum to Stephens, Wyndham sought a statement of plans for curriculum in 1962, suggesting that the major part of thinking about the new curriculum must precede the formal constitution of the statutory boards "at least at the junior level." The immediate task would be to determine details of the first-year courses for 1962, and Wyndham wanted to discuss this at the earliest opportunity. The planning proceeded with vigour and attention to detail. Stephen's recommendations were submitted to the Director-General in May 1961.

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Prior to the 1961 State A.L.P. Conference, Taylor and Federation Secretary Norington obtained a list of delegates through the good offices of a member of the State A.L.P. executive and noted the names of branch delegates who were also teachers. It was then arranged that these teachers be given leave by the Minister for Education, and perhaps even a travel voucher where necessary, in order to attend preparatory briefings with Taylor, Wyndham and Wetherell. One of these teachers was V. Durick, referred to earlier and later a member of Parliament. His involvement is graphically described by one who was at that time a member of Cabinet:

> He received a personal phone call from Wetherell telling him he would not be at school that afternoon. He was called into town to meet Wyndham and Federation officials for a briefing aimed at his influencing other delegates to vote for implementation. Several other teacher delegates were also present.[24]

Wyndham's 'minions' had continued to disseminate widely the details of the *Report of the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales*. The Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations and its constituent associations were generally active in making representations through Members of the Parliament and direct to the Minister seeking implementation of the Report. The newspapers were continuing to pick up newsworthy copy from educators and politicians. The Government was probably becoming increasingly sensitive to newspaper articles and editorials. The impact of various Departmental changes in public secondary schools and a markedly increased holding power beyond the Intermediate Certificate were eroding rapidly the political arguments that parents could not afford the four-year and six-year courses.

Already the Country Party was thinking about a policy regarding direct State-aid to private schools, a move which would diminish at least some concern about the increased costs in offering four-year and six-year courses. The Opposition's general support for the proposed secondary school reform was well known. Public support for the Wyndham Scheme could hardly be doubted in 1961. Elections were looming in 1962, and so it was that there was real political risk in opposing the changes being demanded by educators, the general public, newspapers and the Parliamentary Opposition.

A few days before the State A.L.P. Conference, its Education Committee finalised a report recommending adoption of the Wyndham Report in principle, with two amendments:

- retention of the Intermediate Certificate
- provision of senior bursaries.

The Caucus sub-committee had wanted this A.L.P. Education Committee's report withheld, in order to have more time to work out a compromise formula in relation to 4th year and 6th year. There was in fact considerable confusion as to whether the 'extra' year was the 4th or the 6th year.

Heffron and Wetherell were instructed by Caucus to meet the A.L.P. Education Committee to arrange further discussions. They refrained from this

action until after the Committee's report was in delegates' hands.[25] In formally presenting his report Ryan stated:

> Your committee recommends that the findings of the Report be implemented with the necessary legislation to provide for the bursary scheme and that adequate consideration be given to the effects on prospective apprentices.

The Conference was very well attended, and the Education Committee's recommendations were carried by a clear majority. The decision became binding on the Government: "It has given the right-wing Cabinet a gun to hold at the head of the Caucus left-wing — the threat that its members may lose party pre-selection for the next elections if they don't toe the line."[26]

Cabinet Adoption of the Report

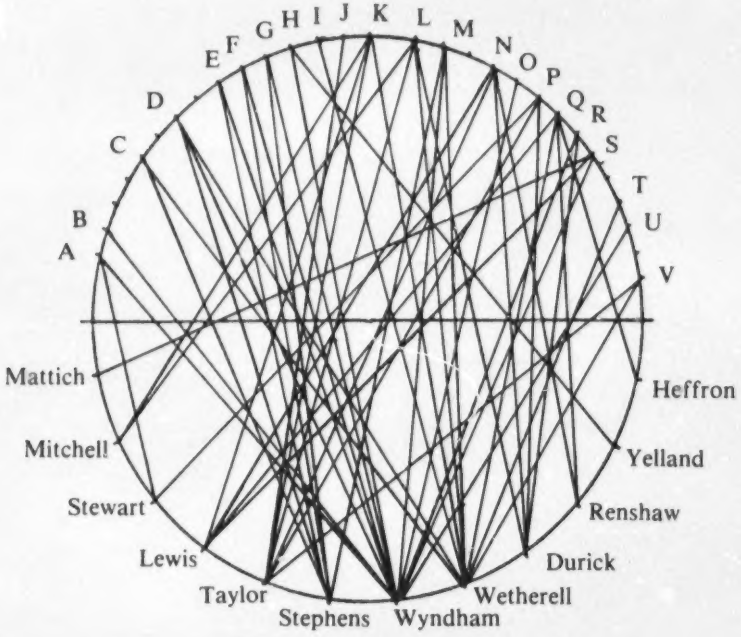
Another month was to pass before Cabinet approved a 1962 implementation of the Wyndham Report. The matter had then to be referred to Caucus before a Bill enabling legislation could be introduced to the Parliament. Caucus yet again passed the Cabinet recommendations to its sub-committee early in August,[27] and the sub-committee once more stalled, this time on grounds of failing to reach agreement on whether the Intermediate Certificate should be based on external or internal examinations.[28] Earl had by now refused to sit on the sub-committee with Wetherell, as a mark of protest against the Minister's successful stratagem in by-passing Caucus and going direct to the State A.L.P. Conference. Earl was replaced on the sub-committee by a relatively new member of Caucus, K. Booth. Booth believed that the internally-marked Intermediate Certificate was of dubious value, with standards varying widely from school to school. The sub-committee, as formerly composed, having earlier insisted successfully upon the retention of an internal examination, it seems highly likely that its new delay in August could be due only to Booth's beliefs that arose out of experience as a teacher in the industrial Hunter Valley.

During the third term of 1961 planning was proceeding, not only within the Head Office, but also in the schools. The panel of secondary school inspectors was active in conducting orientation discussions with principals. Due to Wyndham's and Stephens' drive, circulars on the secondary re-organisation were being sent out to schools. Principals put forward their ideas on what should happen when the new first-formers entered their schools in 1962. In some schools, the organisation for implementation was already far advanced prior to the eventual passing of the implementing legislation.

The day following the press announcement that the sub-committee had again failed to agree on implementation, the Central Executive of the State A.L.P. intervened to affirm unequivocally its policy as resolved at the recent Annual Conference. The meaning of this intervention was clear enough insofar as preselection of candidates was concerned. Then, at the very same time, it was announced publicly that the opposition Country Party was moving towards a policy of direct state aid to private schools and that it would be asking the Liberal Party to support it in this policy during the forthcoming elections. Very rapidly a compromise of a partially-external Intermediate examination was reached and was accepted by Caucus in early September.

The political obstruction and delay were over. The subsequent parliamentary debate was marked by agreement on both sides of both Houses. There was an air of enthusiasm and a certain tone of optimism as events proceeded to legislation and a 1962 implementation.

Figure 2 shows those who were revealed in interview with knowledgeable persons as having been influential in achieving ultimate implementation of the Report.



A — Officer of Teachers Federation
B — Committee Member
C — Officer of Education Department
D — Officer of Education Department
E — Officer of Education Department
F — Officer of Education Department
G — Officer of Education Department
H — School Principal
I — Labor Party Member
J — Officer of Teachers Federation
K — Officer of Teachers Federation
L — Officer of Teachers Federation
M — School Principal
N — Member of Government
O — Member of Caucus Sub-Committee
P — Member of Government
Q — Member of Cabinet
R — Member of Cabinet
S — Member of Caucus Sub-Committee
T — Member of Opposition
U — Member of Opposition
V — Officer of Teachers Federation

Fig. 2. Influential Persons Relevant to the Sudden 1961 Legislation.

Discussion

Two issues of particular interest to educational administrators are embedded in the events here described:

- The importance of political factors in achieving educational change at the level of state policy.
- The influence resources of significant participants.

In the major research which underlies this paper, the bases for analysis of data drew upon theories related to community power structures and political resources. This theory base is fully described elsewhere.[19]

Behind the delay in implementation of the Wyndham Report lay the political upheaval in the Australian Labor Party of the mid-fifties, an apparently parlous situation of state government finance and the average working man's alleged reluctance or inability to pay more for his children to stay at school longer.

The impetus for achieving delay or non-implementation came from Heffron's aspirations to become Premier, and from members of the government who capitalised upon the opportunity given by their voting strength in a Caucus sub-committee to embarrass their parliamentary leadership. At the same time their sincere opinions reflected the concerns of many parents. Their stand being reinforced by Treasury concern about the expense of the implementation, these Members prevailed in a veto for a lengthy period, and their influence is shown to have been greater than that of others in delaying the implementation of the Wyndham Report.

Behind the achievement of legislation in 1961 was the continuing increase in the holding power of secondary schools, and the increasingly supportive climate of opinion that the reforms envisaged in the Report were long overdue. The emergence in 1960 of Wetherell as Minister of Education, a significant new participant, gave fresh impetus to the movement for legislation to reform secondary education. Reinforcement for the new Minister's efforts grew rapidly in late 1960 and early 1961, especially through the supportive intervention of Taylor as President of the Teachers' Federation. These two persons emerge as having exerted greater influence in explicitly achieving the 1961 legislation than did others in the large cast of participants.

None of this is to detract from Wyndham's own significant initiatives and persistence. However, in the events described in this paper Wyndham's role was constantly, necessarily and significantly supportive rather than decisive. Suffice it to say here that Wyndham personally dominated the educational scene in New South Wales during this period 1957-61 because of his achieved position in the State system of education and because of his commitment to seek reform in secondary education. His outlook was compatible with the developing social ethos and educational outlook of his times. His personal drive did a great deal to develop and channel this outlook into the form of sharply-focused social pressures for reform. Later papers can take up such

interesting questions as his role as committee chairman, events leading up to the establishment of the committee, planning within the Education Department in anticipation of legislation, or the role of a permanent head in relationship to his Minister.

It remains to examine now the political or influence resources of the key participants in delaying implementation, and in finally achieving implementation, of the Wyndham Report.

The resources of the Caucus recalcitrants which are revealed by analysis of the data as being most pertinent to the outcomes they sought were:

(i) Timing, in that the fate of the Wyndham Report came into their hands at a time when Heffron's aspirations were directed towards the premiership.

(ii) Control over votes in the Caucus sub-committee, and a sufficient number of votes in the full Caucus to embarrass the Government if they refused to vote with it along party lines.

(iii) Persistence, in pursuing their obstructive tactics in the face of appeal, persuasion and eventual threat.

Heffron's liability or limitation lay in his aspirations. He was unwilling to risk the expenditure of his resources on this particular educational issue. Knowing the power of the Caucus he desired to reserve his resources for his preferred outcome of achieving the State premiership.

The resources possessed and utilised by Wetherell which proved most pertinent to the outcomes he sought were:

(i) Solidarity as a basic principle of Labor Party politics, with the power of A.L.P. Conference and Executive enforcing this solidarity if need be.

(ii) Timing, with an early 1962 general election in the offing, was a powerful resource.

(iii) Ability to choose eventual goals that did not strain the compliance of the other persons involved in the making of policy. This was evident in his briefing of Ryan and in his compromising with the Caucus recalcitrants on both the Intermediate and the sixth year issues.

(iv) Control over jobs, through the solidarity of the Party whereby State Executive had control over pre-selection of candidates for the 1962 elections.

(v) Accuracy in perception of the power structure in his access to the A.L.P. Education Committee through Teachers Federation contacts in order to mobilise the annual conference of the Party in support of his objectives.

(vi) Persistence and determination arising out of his persuasion of the virtues of the Wyndham Report and the background support of his Premier.

(vii) Status in the Caucus as the Member for Cobar and for his personal qualities.

(viii) Ability to form coalitions with others in order to achieve his goals, as seen especially in his alliance with the Teachers' Federation senior officers.

(ix) Access to coercion and sanction over others through the power of State Executive of the Party.

The resources Taylor possessed which were most pertinent to the outcomes he sought in 1960-61 were:

(i) Interaction with influentials such as Heffron, Wetherell, Ryan and Ducker.

(ii) Ability to form coalitions with others in order to achieve goals, as seen in his alliance with Wetherell and Ryan.

(iii) Associational ties whence power derived: essentially his Teachers' Federation ties.

(iv) Control over information, in that he was able to provide to politicians and party members information which guided them in making decisions about the Wyndham Report, and was able to provide media for the transmission of information by those who sought implementation of the Report.

The resources revealed in the data as most pertinent in enabling Wyndham to influence events were:

(i) Commitment to the achievement of reform in secondary education.

(ii) Willingness to assume leadership tasks. In fact, leadership was his normative role. However, his leadership initiatives went beyond this.

(iii) Eminence or status attaching to his dual positions as Director-General of Education and Chairman of the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales.

(iv) Reputation for expertise, which confirmed his eminence or status.

(v) Knowledge, which justified both status and reputation. Wyndham's expert knowledge of secondary selection problems and procedures, his knowledge of Departmental procedures and facilities, his knowledge of vital precedents and of contemporary international developments in education all ensured his influence.

(vi) Office as Director-General and the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto which led to planning in response to growing pressures upon

secondary schools and which in turn reinforced recommendations of the Report.

(vii) Access to, or control over, organisational facilities, especially the skills of the staff of the Education Department in ensuring ongoing planning in anticipation of implementation of his committee's recommendations.

(viii) Persistence in seeking the reform of secondary education, and in, pressing the benefits of his committee's recommendations upon all who would listen.

(ix) Interaction with influentials and opinion-leaders in the parliament, in professional education, and in the cultural life of Sydney.

(x) Visibility, especially as achieved through the support activities of Rubie, through willingness to travel widely to address parents and teachers, and in relation to the status of his position.

Conclusions

1. This paper has revealed the importance of political factors in gaining implementation of an educational plan that has state-wide application.

2. Evidence has been found, in the study from which this paper derives, to indicate that *effective influence both in delaying moves for legislation and in achieving the 1961 legislation was due to temporary groupings or coalitions of influential leaders.* There is no evidence at all of a continuing or close-knit power structure that more generally influences state level policy formation in education.

3. The really vital decisions revealed in this study of state level policy formation were not those upon the educational questions, but upon the political question of whether the recommendations of educational experts would be implemented. Although some might hope that policy-making in education would be determined by rational, logical procedures based on professional analyses, the evidence of this investigation indicates clearly that state level policy was determined by political decisions which reflected political and community aspirations.

4. It should not be assumed, though, that professional recommendations are of little value. The facts are that the administrator cannot rely simply upon the rationality of his advice to obtain the necessary political action on education policies.

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THE PROCESS OF POLICY MAKING IN TAFE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA — THE SEPARATION ISSUE

ANNA C. ALDERSON

This paper examines a particular issue as an example of the various factors which can influence the formation and implementation of an aspect of state government education policy. While it is hoped that throughout this discussion the complexity of any policy making and implementation in education will become apparent in the main the paper explores the point at which the issue ceases to be such and the proposals are implemented i.e. the point at which policy becomes practice.

The origin of this paper is a study currently being undertaken by the author of the process of policy making and implementation in TAFE in Western Australia. In carrying this out all senior and many junior personnel in the Technical Education Division (T.E.D.) of the Education Department have been interviewed, several senior personnel in the Education Department and relevant other people such as past and present Ministers of Education in W.A., previous personnel from T.E.D. and representatives of other government departments, industry and unions. In addition numerous documents, official and unofficial, used by T.E.D. and others have been examined. The complete study, which focuses on the organisation of T.E.D. and its interaction with other groups and individuals as well as internally, interspersed with case studies of various issues which have arisen during its course, is due to be completed this year. This paper represents an initial look at one of the issues chosen for study.

To begin, it seems useful to look carefully at what this issue is all about. Essentially what we are concerned with is the separation or retention of the Technical Education Division within the Education Department. The basic point of contention is whether those who provide TAFE services should be masters of their own fate or subject to the organisation whose major responsibility is the compulsory education sector of the primary and secondary schools.

The current position in Australia varies from state to state. In NSW since 1949, in South Australia since 1974, and in Victoria from 1981, the technical education services have been controlled by an authority or department entirely independent and separate from the Education Department. In the remaining states they are not separate. Those other states include W.A. However there are various degrees of 'non-separation'. All states during the 1970s have held major educational inquiries which have included the status of their TAFE sectors and all have come out with recommendations which support TAFE separation in the future. Governments have reacted with varying degrees of speed and enthusiasm to these recommendations. In W.A. despite a recent functional reorganisation of the administrative side of the Education Department, Technical Education has been retained as a separate division. This division itself has recently undergone reorganisation but at the very top, the Director (who has had a variety of different titles over the past few years)

still reports through the Director-General of Education to the Minister. Thus, however much independence officers within the division are given it is still administratively part of the Education Department.

A little more of the history of the development of TAFE in Australia and in W.A. may help to set the issue in context. Technical education has been very much the Cinderella of education in Australia. The upsurge in interest in technical education in all parts of Australia in the 1970s can be set against the revival of the Universities in the late 1950s after the Murray Report, and the creation of the Universities Commission and the establishment of the CAE sector after the Martin Report of the mid-1960s. Industry, however, was still not being provided with the labour force it needed. Observations by industry and government leaders overseas led to a desire to revamp the training process of technicians, skilled and semi-skilled labour who for many years had been locked into the apprenticeship system. Until the 1970s there was a lack of resources for much innovation to occur but with the commissioning of the Kangan Report this appeared to be about to change. Change has undoubtedly occurred but it has been perhaps less spectacular than that in the Universities and the CAEs where expansion took place at a time of economic growth, compared with the last half-decade of economic recession.

Unlike the Universities and the CAEs the states have been and continue to be the prime providers of TAFE. Approximately 30% of the costs are borne by the Commonwealth with the remaining 70% being met by the states. For this provision TAFE has to compete with pre-school, primary and secondary education for what is available. At a time when all other sectors are showing a decline in enrolments almost all parts of TAFE are showing continuous increases. Thus from being largely unnoticed, and certainly unsung, TAFE has recently achieved something of 'favoured son' status. In some respects, in fact, this time of recession has assisted TAFE because it has been singled out as the one area which it is hoped can most contribute to the rejuvenation which is hoped for in the Australian economy. It is not clear whether the renewed interest in TAFE has fuelled the separation debate. Whether or not this is the case the issue is certainly one of the most intense and significant to occupy TAFE administrators in Australia in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Before going on to look at the issue in more detail it should be emphasised the purpose of this paper is not to comment on the desirability of separation. Rather, its aim is to look at the process of the discussion of the issue and the sort of factors which have influenced the decisions which have been made on the subject from time to time.

Important Factors in the Separation Issue

An enormous variety of reasons for and against separation has been advanced during the course of the debate, but they can be sorted into a number of categories (not necessarily mutually exclusive). They are not to be dealt with in any order of importance here but to divide them in this way helps to simplify our understanding of them.

Educational Factors

In the first instance there are educational arguments. These centre on the nature of TAFE provision. Those who favor separation point to the differences in TAFE compared with the primary and secondary schools with which they are coupled in the Department. Their clients, for example, are different. Attendance at TAFE institutions is not compulsory as is the case (for the most part) for primary and secondary students. They are more mature than the average student at primary and secondary school. In most cases they are economically independent, and they are very much vocationally oriented, with their educational needs being more specific than general. The teachers, too, are often different. Their approach to teaching is claimed to be different; the courses which they teach are different; and many have a background in industry. There is enormous diversity in both the range and the level of courses offered.

Those who are against separation highlight the similarities between technical education and secondary education. Indeed they often point to the overlap between them, particularly in the provision for upper secondary level and pre-vocational courses. Adult education is another area in which many of the evening courses are provided by school teachers using school facilities. It is argued that this overlap and similarity is a good reason for retaining the Technical Education Division within the Department and that where differences do exist they have been and will continue to be adequately met by the Department. At the basis of these difficulties is the very wide-ranging nature of TAFE. The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission Act, 1977, defines it in the following way:

> Technical and further education means education provided by way of a course of instruction or training that is, or is preparatory to, a course of a kind relevant to a trade, technical or other skilled occupation or that otherwise meets educational needs not being (a) education provided at a University or at a prescribed Commonwealth institution, (b) education provided at a College of Advanced Education other than education declared by the Commission by resolution not to be a course of advanced education, or (c) primary or secondary education provided by way of a full-time course in a school.

TAFE then is virtually everything that is not provided by somebody else. With such a catch-all definition it is unlikely that there would not be some overlap between its functions and those of other sectors. Whether this is desirable or not is another matter.

Administrative Factors

Another set of arguments is the administrative ones. Those who argue for separation point to the multi-campus organisation that exists in W.A. in the technical education sector. By this they mean the thirteen metropolitan Technical Colleges (and to a lesser extent those located in country districts) which, by the nature of the specialisations they have developed, in fact form not a number of separate institutions as high schools do in W.A. but rather an organisation with a number of campuses. Administratively, then, they are quite different from the primary and secondary schools and it is believed that

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the administration of this type of organisation could be more efficiently carried out if they were not tied to the Education Department.

Another administrative aspect is the inter-relationship of technical education with industry and with other government departments; an inter-relationship which by and large does not exist with the other sectors of education. The proponents of separation maintain that this inter-relationship could be sustained more effectively if Technical Education formed a separate unit with its own organisational head. Currently no key decisions can be made without reference to the Director-General of Education. This it is believed downgrades the authority of the Director of Technical Education when conferring with other organisational heads, and slows down the response time of the Division in meeting the needs of other organisations. Then, too, it is argued that the various sub-units of the Education Department have been planned to meet the needs of the Technical Colleges. Those against separation point to the many planning functions which can be and are undertaken through the Education Department which has the same source of finance. Such things as the acquistion of sites, and major works programmes can be channelled through the Education Department without the necessity for duplicating staff.

Financial Factors

The concern over the duplication of staff inevitably raises the whole question of finance. Those favoring separation assert that there would not necessarily be any extra cost involved if Technical Education operated as a separate department, especially now that new positions have already been created and filled in that area. Those against maintain that duplication of services would have to occur and therefore would involve extra costs. They point to an earlier example when the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) was established some 15 years ago when it was separated from the Education Department. Courses offered by the T.E.D. which were tertiary level courses became the nucleus of the new institution which today is the single biggest tertiary institution in W.A. with a seemingly insatiable appetite for swallowing smaller institutions and proliferating courses. Its birth produced considerable extra costs. Similarly in the early 1970s the Teachers' Colleges which had been run and financed by the State Education Department were separated from it and eventually became independent Colleges of Advanced Education. As in the case of WAIT there was an enormous increase in the cost of running these institutions, it is argued. While this is a powerful argument if it could be verified it is hard to know in reality whether it was a necessary corollary of these institutions becoming independent.

Political Considerations

Then there are political reasons, which are not Party political because in this instance these have been very few. What is involved is the question of power: those who are seeking power; those who wish to maintain the power they have already. Those who favor separation believe that a separate department with its own director would have greater power to determine its own fate: the direction in which the development of TAFE should go: greater ability to

compete with other sectors of education for scarce resources available; greater lobbying power particularly with the support of industry; direct access to the Minister which would allow it to better argue its case for extra money; and, of course, individuals at the top would themselves have more power. Those who are against separation feel that the greater competition for scarce resources would not assist anybody's cause. And those at the top in the Education Department would, in a sense, have less power; they would certainly have less under their control with the removal of the Technical Education Division from their empire.

Industrial Relations

A further category might be termed industrial relations. Those for separation maintain that there would be more possibilities for a variety of conditions for staff. There would be more opportunities for interchange of staff members with industry without the constraints of current industrial conditions negotiated to benefit teachers in the primary and secondary school service. More people, it is argued, could be attracted to technical education from industry on a short-term basis with contracts arranged individually for each situation as it arose. In that way it would be more possible for T.E.D. to compete with industry when top quality technicians are in short supply. Separation, it is believed, would also assist the establishment of common conditions of service for College and Head Office personnel which would allow College people to take a more significant part in policy formation. Administrators too, feel constrained by their inability to negotiate directly with their staffs' union on industrial disputes but instead have to go through Education Department channels. Those against separation believe that permanent teachers within the Technical Education service may well lose what to many appear to be very favourable conditions which they currently have in terms of holidays, hours of work and overtime payments. One of the most important arguments posited against this variation in conditions of service is the difficulties it could create for the State Government with two sets of teachers traditionally bound by the same regulations negotiating with two different authorities. The current government has already had great difficulty in trying to break a pay nexus which had been established between N.S.W. teachers and those of W.A. It is likely that it would be even more difficult, indeed some argue it would be impossible, within W.A.

Significant Events in the Separation Issue

Having given some indication of the sort of arguments which have been raised in the separation debate, it is now intended to trace some of the significant events which have occurred during the course of this debate. The current bout of jousting over the issue can be traced back to the mid-1960s when WAIT was established as an independent institution. While no one would doubt the benefits which its advent brought to post-secondary education in W.A. (and indeed Australia) it nevertheless had a severe and largely detrimental effect on technical education in W.A. — at least in the short term. Not only did WAIT occupy the site which had been set aside for relocating Perth Technical College, it also had all the upper level courses offered by technical education allocated to it. And this transfer of courses was

accompanied by a transfer of staff many of whom were top-level lecturers and administrators. While WAIT continued to flourish in the years that followed Technical Education had taken a body blow from which it is only now beginning to recover. This is not to say that those who did not transfer to WAIT were only second-rate, but the removal of so many of the better qualified and innovative staff could not but effect the morale and performance of those left behind.

Another more subtle but far-reaching effect on T.E.D. by WAIT's establishment was the change that occurred after this time in the composition of T.E.D. staff. The vacuum created by the wholesale transfer of so many staff was quickly filled by teachers from the secondary division. Because T.E.D. was part of the Department, transfer from secondary to technical teaching could be readily achieved and these people with their formal teaching qualifications and seniority were able to rise quickly in a system which rewarded these aspects. At the time when WAIT was created there was some discussion of establishing T.E.D. as a separate Department and although the then Director was a keen advocate for it nothing came of the idea. In the ensuing years the Division had a good deal of *de facto* independence. This was often as much by default as by intention. The degree of integration between T.E.D. and the Department has always been very dependent on the Director-General of Education. It has always been within his power to insist on the formal channels being pursued or to allow alternative avenues to operate.

As already noted, it was towards the middle of the 1970s that technical education in Australia began to receive more sustained government interest. In 1974 the Kangan Committee was appointed by the Federal Government to inquire into the provision of TAFE in Australia. In some respects its establishment seems to have been an afterthought. The Whitlam Labor Government came to power in 1972 with a very strong education platform and within a matter of months and in some instances, weeks, appointed committees to inquire into almost every aspect of education which was not already serviced by the Federal Government. Somehow in the rush TAFE missed out, but with the appointment of the Kangan Committee this deficiency was righted.

The final report of this Committee dealt with a great array of problems facing technical education in Australia and proved to be a significant landmark as far as technical education was concerned. As with other areas essentially under state control recommendations regarding basic structures or administrative arrangements were hard to make and even more difficult to implement unless they could be tied to monetary incentives. Despite representations having been made to the Committee on the issue of separation and the recording in the report of the disquiet felt by many groups at the lack of independence, the Committee did not devote a great deal of time or space to this issue. It recognised the difficulties TAFE sectors felt they encountered in operating as part of the Education Departments and considered that separation may be beneficial to them. It did not go so far as to recommend separation but did suggest that the issue warranted widespread discussion in the community. This provided something of a filip to state TAFE divisions who for years had had to fight to gain representation at meetings of the

Australian Education Council. The Report lent indirect support to the argument in other ways. For the first time an attempt was made to define TAFE, even if it did result in a catch-all definition; it did at least do something to resolve the identity crisis from which it seems to have always suffered. Perhaps even more significantly it placed TAFE firmly within the post-secondary education sector. While the Federal Government did not accept complete responsibility for its funding, as it did for the other sectors in the post-secondary field, its closer identification with these sectors at both state and Federal level has given weight to the arguments that TAFE is different from the primary and secondary sectors.

In 1974 the Liberal-Country Party Government in W.A. appointed the Partridge Committee to inquire into Post-Secondary Education in W.A. and, in so doing, was the first state to recognise TAFE as being legitimately part of this sector. Its terms of reference clearly spelled this out and the Committee produced a number of recommendations concerning the operation of technical education in the state. The vast majority of submissions it received about TAFE favoured the establishment of an independent TAFE department or statutory authority, and Partridge Committee members seemed to have no hesitation in recommending this course of action. Their conclusions were based on the differences they noted between the TAFE population, course and organisational requirements and those of the secondary sector. They confirmed its position in the post-secondary sector and recommended its establishment as a statutory authority, joining the Universities and the CAEs under the umbrella of the Western Australian Post-Secondary Education Commission (WAPSEC) which they suggested should be established to replace the former Tertiary Education Commission.

The Partridge Report was well received by the Court Government and WAPSEC was duly formed. One of its first tasks was to report in more detail on the separation proposals involving TAFE. They prepared a report which was submitted to the Minister in 1977. Once again most of the submissions WAPSEC received favoured separation for T.E.D. The most vociferous objections came from the Education Department, supported by the Public Service Board and Treasury, all of whom were concerned at the likely increase in costs. The Report not only reviewed the arguments for and against separation but produced an outline for a phased upgrading of T.E.D. facilities and operations leading ultimately to its separation as an independent statutory authority. Again however the Government baulked at the possibility.

In November 1977 the Minister for Education announced that while the Government was not prepared at that time to accept the WAPSEC proposals *in toto*, it intended to implement significant changes in T.E.D. and after their implementation it would review the separation issue. This resulted in moves to make T.E.D. a more recognisabale sub-department headed by an Assistant-Director General (third position in the Education Department hierarchy) to be appointed after 'wide advertisement', and the establishment of a Technical Advisory Council to provide yet another channel of advice to the Government on the needs of technical education. 1978 saw the appointment of the current Director of Technical Education and the following year the proposed Advisory Council came into being.

With the appointment of a new Assistant Director-General who had been recruited from the U.K. by the Minister for Education and the Chairman of WAPSEC, proposals for changes in the direction, administrative structure and general outlook of technical education were soon forthcoming. Certainly the ADG on his appointment had understood that the creation of a new TAFE Department or Authority was imminent once the powers that be were satisfied that the Division was adequately established.

There were however other forces operating. The Public Service Board established a Review Group in 1979 to examine the general and financial administration of the Education Department as a whole. The Department has traditionally been staffed by people who have risen through the education hierarchy from their beginnings as teachers, without necessarily possessing administrative expertise or training. People with this type of background generally occupied only low-level positions. It was to this imbalance that the Rutherford Review Group (composed essentially of Public Service Board, Treasury and Education Department Accounting staff) was addressing itself. Part of its brief concerned the administration of the Technical Education Division though they were precluded from examining the separation question as such. It is in this light that it subsequently suggested that greater administrative and support links between the Division and the Department would be beneficial. By the same token it also recommended a further upgrading of the ADG position, this time to Deputy-Director General (TAFE), to enhance the Division's policy making potential at the top level, and the creation of a number of senior management positions. Some, though not all of these recommendations have been acted upon.

Also in 1979 the Minister for Education created a Working Party consisting of senior officers from the Department and T.E.D. officials from WAPSEC and representatives from industry to review the situation as it was at that time and to advise him on administrative and legislative amendments necessary for any subsequent reorganisation of the Division. Their Interim Report described a regional/specialist college system administered by a State Colleges Council. The Minister's response was to ask the Committee to consider the formation of a separate Government Department. The Committee duly produced the required blueprint only to find in June 1980 that the new Minister announced that once again the Government had decided against separation for T.E.D. More advice was solicited and given to the Minister from the W.A. TAFE Advisory Council on the needs of the Division. While the official comments at the time alluded to 'administrative and economic considerations' and 'educational grounds' both the current Minister (since 1980) and the previous Minister (1977-80) have acknowledged in interviews that the major concerns have been financial ones. In the light of the increasingly tight economic climate that has prevailed in the last few years this is perhaps not surprising.

While there have been no more official reports during the last year and considerable moves have been made towards the greater integration of some T.E.D. functions with those of the Department, action behind the scenes has not ceased and pressure continues for the separation of the Division.

Influential Contributors to the Debate

During the period under consideration various individuals and organisations have contributed significantly to the debate and this discussion would not be complete without mention of at least some of them.

One interesting group has been the State School Teachers' Union of W.A., especially as they have changed their official stance over the years. Their initial submissions to Partridge and to WAPSEC favoured separation on educational, economic and industrial grounds. They considered that if students were in a system more closely allied to the rest of the post-secondary sector then technical education would become a more attractive alternative to the CAEs and the universities. Another common argument they raised was that a separate department would have a greater ability to fight for scarce resources. Finally they argued that the rules and regulations designed for primary and secondary teachers, but also used for technical teachers, imposed limitations which were not necessarily desirable or advantageous. Recently their position on separation has been changed by their Annual Conferences. As the arguments have become more protracted some teachers have recognised that separation might in fact disadvantage them. Moves in other parts of the service to change the conditions of service of some employees have led them to believe that independence from their primary and secondary colleagues may not only mean an initial renegotiation of conditions but also leave them with less industrial clout to do anything about it. The establishment of a special Technical Education wing in the Union itself has strengthened this position. The official SSTUWA stance of separation is now one of opposition.

The Education Department has remained implacably opposed to separation from the start. Their public comments have centred upon —

(i) the argument that technical education is and should be more closely aligned with secondary education than post-secondary education;

(ii) that any differences that do exist have been and will continue to be catered for within the Education Department structure;

(iii) that greater competition for funds would not improve either sector especially if such competition was then carried on in public and ultimate decisions made by the Cabinet rather than within the Department;

(iv) that the duplication of services and positions would inevitably lead to considerable cost increases;

(v) the implication that renegotiation of conditions of service for technical teachers might have implications for primary and secondary teachers in view of the long standing nexus between them. Serious difficulties might arise with two sets of teachers negotiating and playing off two sets of authorities.

Treasury and the Public Service Board have in general supported these views. Other factors which need to be noted however are the concern that some

senior officers of the Education Department have and do feel about the ability of the Division to manage its own affairs. Perhaps also significant is a rather normal reluctance on the part of any organisation to allow a part of itself to be hived off especially at a time when that section is attracting more in the way of Commonwealth funds than any other. This type of attitude may be accentuated in a typically centralised, hierarchical organisation. Furthermore, given the views expressed by the current Director-General of Education that secondary education has and should take precedence over technical education, it seems unlikely that he would be keen to see T.E.D. separate. And, in a time of tightened funding, increased competition for what is available is not likely to be a palatable thought to any administrator.

Generally industry has supported separation. Submissions have been made to the various inquiries by such industry groups as the Confederation of W.A. Industry, the Perth Chamber of Commerce, and the Industrial Training Advisory Council. Representations to the various Ministers have been made by individuals and groups from industry since these inquiries. Much of their concern has centred on the need for TAFE to be more responsive to the needs of industry both in terms of content and in reaction time, and the belief in most cases that this could be more readily achieved with a separate organisation. The Education Department of course, deny this. Industry interests have for some time been represented on the multitudinous T.E.D. advisory committees on such matters as course content, specific industry needs and regulations, and suitable staff appointments. The establishment of the state TAFE Advisory Council was intended to give industry, both from the employer and the union level, a greater say in the policy making process in technical education and provide another avenue of advice on technical education to the Minister. Neither of these roles has been comfortably assumed b the Council and at present it seems to have largely subsided into limbo since the resignation of its Chairman and some other industry representatives in 1981.

Conclusion

Ultimately a decision on the issue lies with the Government and essentially the Cabinet, and while a majority of its advisors in the past seem to have been in favour of separation the most influential ones seem to have been against it. On at least two occasions it has come very close to deciding in favour of separation but each time it has drawn back. The fact that the Director of TAFE has no official access to the Minister except through the DGE (who is opposed to separation, and whose office lies adjacent to the Minister's) and the weight of Treasury arguments, whose interests in Cabinet are carried by the very powerful Premier, are possibly the significant factors which have won the day so far. That is not to say that the issue is dead and buried. It is still very much a live issue in W.A. and indeed amongst some officials within the Division and the Department generally it is probably the single most important issue confronting TAFE in W.A. It is continually being discussed, canvassed, lobbied for and against and colours a great many other issues that arise. Many other issues are in fact seen in terms of whether they will assist or hinder separation or integration.

Even in those states where separation has occurred it seems that the issue has not been laid to rest, because there are those who seek reintegration with the Education Department. N.S.W. and S.A. have both had recent inquiries which have questioned the wisdom of separation in these states but in each case the decision has been in favour of retaining separation. If separation was to occur in W.A. it seems unlikely that the issue would fade away any more rapidly than it has done elsewhere. Why should this be so? It may be that the very nature of TAFE, being as it is the remainder of all other sectors of education, means that it will inevitably be part of demarcation disputes between those with which it overlaps. Indeed it may be that until it develops a secure, clear identity of its own, perhaps as the rightful provider of vocational education (as the trend seems to be), that these issues will recur. On the other hand whether this sort of distinction is in the best interests of students and education generally is dubious. It is certainly not what the Australian Council on TAFE or the TAFE Commission have seen as its role. Nor is it in line with the establishment of community colleges embracing as they do a variety of levels of education and supported in W.A. by Partridge and nationally by the more recent Williams Report.

In conclusion attention is drawn again to the complexity of the policy making process and the difficulty there is in even deciding when a policy has been implemented. It is clear too that while many groups and individuals influence the Government in major issues like this, the Government has the final say and recently it seems that fiscal considerations have been paramount.

It is important that this issue should be resolved soon. For, while it has been a fascinating exercise to observe its progress, it seems that there is not a great deal to be gained from continued debate on the subject. The arguments for both sides have been canvassed thoroughly and despite the assertions of their adherents there does not seem to be a clear-cut case for one side or the other. While arguments about it continue, however, there is a concentration of effort by a number of important and competent administrators on an issue which is essentially non-productive educationally. In addition, because attention continues to be focused on the issue there is a perceived need to demonstrate how different TAFE is from other sectors of education. It may be detrimental to education generally that at a time when there is considerable evidence of the desirability of greater integration between the sectors, TAFE will be trying to establish its exclusiveness. In so doing it may find itself excluded altogether. There are other organisations educational and non-educational, from private industry and other government departments, willing to step in and take over if TAFE is unwilling or unable to produce the desired goods. That would be an unfortunate resolution of the issue.

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